

Minnesota Transportation Museum, Inc.

# MINNEGAZETTE

Spring 1989







Official Publication of the

**MINNESOTA  
TRANSPORTATION  
MUSEUM, INC.**

P.O. Box 1796, Pioneer Station  
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**CIRCULATION**

The *Minnegazette* is published quarterly by the Minnesota Transportation Museum, Inc., and is mailed to members in good standing without charge under Third Class postal permit. Members may request First Class mailing for an additional \$5 per year charge.

**SUBMISSIONS**

The *Minnegazette* welcomes submissions for publication of articles, photos and other illustrative materials of historical or current interest relating to transportation in the Upper Midwest. No payment is made, and publication is at the editors' discretion.

**MUSEUM PURPOSE**

The Museum is a non-profit educational corporation organized in Minnesota in 1962, to acquire, restore, maintain, exhibit, and operate historical artifacts of land transportation. It operates the *Como-Harriet Streetcar Line* and the *Minnehaha Depot* in Minneapolis, the *Jackson Street Roundhouse* in St. Paul, and the *Stillwater & St. Paul Railroad* in Stillwater, Minnesota.

**Public Information**

(612) 228-0263  
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(612) 228-9412

**MUSEUM OFFICERS**

President ..... Aaron Isaacs  
Executive VP ..... Ward Gilkerson  
Secretary ..... Jim Woodward  
Treasurer ..... Wendell Gilkerson  
VP/Traction ..... Curt Allen  
VP/Railroad ..... Kenneth Snyder  
VP/Stillwater ..... DuWane Shogren  
Directors at Large ..... Arthur E. Pew III  
Bob Ball  
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Byron Olsen  
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**About The Cover:** Milwaukee Road Baldwin RS-12 road switcher No 926 sits on old Minneapolis and Eastern trackage near the downtown Minneapolis Milwaukee Road depot. The Baldwin RS-12 was a fairly rare type of locomotive, especially in the early 1970's when this photo appears to have been taken. Turn to page 13 to read about other early road switcher type locomotives that were produced before the EMD "GP" series took the country by storm. (Minnesota Transportation Museum Collection)

**Inside Cover:** Twin Cities' rapid transit in the 1880's was not too rapid by today's standards. In the days of mud streets, a Minneapolis that became farm fields near Lake Street, and no such thing as the automobile, the streetcar was the most convenient way to commute. Minneapolis Street Railway No 132, a Washington and Cedar Avenue car, is typical of the early horse drawn streetcars of the 1870's and 80's. The job of streetcar driver must have been more than a little cold during the winter months in Minnesota with no real cab to speak of. (Bill Olsen Collection)

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**1989 MEETING SCHEDULE**

This is your official notice of Museum membership meetings scheduled for 1989. Please note them on your calendar or appointment book. The meeting schedule will appear in the *Minnegazette*, but separate notices will not be mailed for each meeting during the year. All meetings will begin at 7:30 p.m.

**May 23: Prudential Building,**  
3701 Wayzata Blvd., Minneapolis.

**July 25: Jackson Street Roundhouse,**  
193 E Pennsylvania Avenue, St Paul.  
Bring Lawn Chair.

**September 26: Air National Guard Auditorium,**  
Fort Snelling.

**November 28: Annual Meeting**  
Northwestern National Life Building,  
Washington & Marquette Avenues, Minneapolis.

# Announcements

## Additions/Corrections

I received many letters regarding the Chicago Great Western photos in the Winter 1988 issue of the Minnegazette. Obviously, as many of you noted, the unknown station stop on page 13 is the St Paul Union Depot. While I thought that was possibly where the photo was taken, there were no captions on the backs of the photos, except dates on a few occasions. Not wanting to mistakenly call it SPUD and then find out it may be Kansas City or something, I opted for the easy way out. I did try to search through old photos to find a familiar landmark but I didn't recognize anything.

Also, as pointed out by member **Ray Norton**, CGW Baldwin 0-8-0 switcher No 18 pictured on page 16 of the same issue was originally, St Paul Bridge and Terminal No 18 and joined the CGW when they took over the StPB&T.

Thanks to all who wrote or phoned. I know quite a bit about rail history but not everything. I can always stand to learn a little more.

## Minnegazette Mailings

Remember that unless you request and pay for first class mailing with your membership renewal, the Minnegazette is mailed third class. If you have moved recently please notify the membership secretary as soon as possible so that the Minnegazette and all other mailings can be sent to your new address. The post office does not forward third class mail, they throw it in the trash so if you have moved recently and haven't received your mailings, you probably didn't send us your new address. Send address corrections to:

**William Cordes — Membership Secretary**  
**PO Box 1796 — Pioneer Station**  
**St Paul, MN 55101—0796**

## COLOR PHOTO CONTEST

I would like to announce an interesting first for the Minnegazette. For the first time (to the best of my knowledge), the Minnegazette will be holding a color photo contest! The winning photo will be printed on the cover of the 1989 summer issue of the Minnegazette.

The following rules will apply:

- 1) To participate you must be an associate, active, or family member as of 1989.
- 2) All entries must be of a color slide transparency format, no prints please.
- 3) The subject of the photos shall be limited to MTM activities or equipment. It could be of MTM locomotives or streetcars in revenue service for their former railroads before retirement. Please include a caption or description.
- 4) Deadline for submission is Wednesday, May 31, 1989.

Please send all entries to:

**Jeffrey Braun**  
**7239 16th Avenue South**  
**Richfield, MN 55423**

If you wish to have your photos returned, please include a self addressed stamped envelope otherwise all photos will become the property of the Minnegazette archives.

## Thanks:

Metropolitan Transit Commission for donation of machine tools.

## Got A Question?

### Just Dial

**228 - 0263 FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION**  
**228 - 9412 FOR MEMBERS INFORMATION**

Ever wonder what's happening at Stillwater, Jackson Street Roundhouse, Lake Harriet this weekend? Are Stillwater trains running on schedule, and which pieces of track are crews working? Where are volunteers needed, and what will they be doing? Not sure who to call, and can't find your Minnegazette that might (or might not) give you the answer?

MTM had you in mind when we installed telephone lines with a regularly up-dated information message. Nick Modders revises the messages regularly to help members stay up to the minute on what's happening, where and when. Now, through the magic of electronics, no MTM member need stay home and housebound on weekends. Just dial the number and find out where it's at!



## Editorial

It was a year ago that I sat down and wrote my first editorial for the **Minnegazette**. As the new editor, I really had no idea exactly how to put a magazine together. I'm a college student but my major is in business administration and management, not journalism. Fortunately we had the assistance of **Kimberly Link**, our newest addition to the staff besides myself, who is a journalism major at the University of Minnesota and volunteers on the **Minnegazette** in an intern type of position. Her help and advice has been invaluable. Regretfully, because of her schedule, Kim will no longer be available to help us out on the **Minnegazette**. I want to thank her for her time and expertise, it was a pleasure working with her. Good luck Kim, on your future endeavors! I also couldn't have gotten anywhere without the help of **Hudson Leighton** and his desktop publishing system which he allows the **Minnegazette** to use in addition to his hours of help in page layout with each issue.

As I look at each new issue as it comes off the press, I always feel that it's rather mediocre and I could have done a lot better but there's no end to the positive compliments I always get from people I talk to. I guess I would like to think that I have improved as the year moved on (although on time performance was one of my downfalls) and that as time goes on and I gain more experience the **Minnegazette** will be as good as it

has been in the past. I enjoy putting this magazine together and hope that you find it as enjoyable to read.

People generally are uncomfortable with change and I, tending to be tradition oriented, am especially adamant toward change. Regardless of that fact, it doesn't mean that my mind is totally closed off to new ideas and I obviously have some of my own which I would like to try. Many people have probably already noticed subtle changes in the **Minnegazette** over the past year. I figure if we try something a little different in each issue the changes are easier to accept because you may notice something is a little different but you're not quite sure what it is. I have no intentions of totally changing the format of the **Minnegazette** because I like the style that my predecessors have already established and like I already said, I felt that tradition is very important.

You may have noticed some of the changes already. The masthead appears at the top of the cover, the inside covers are now photos, each issue has some type of center spread, there are also many tiny technical changes. I also want to try to include more drawings when appropriate, and feature articles on particular locomotive types, pieces of rolling stock, or traction equipment. We may also have more color photos in the future, budget permitting. People interested in writing articles or sharing photos should send them in, member input is always welcome and will be included as space permits, but remember the scope of the **Minnegazette** is general-

ly restricted to Minnesota rail and traction subjects at the very least and the five state area (Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and lower regions of Manitoba and Ontario), at the very most.

Thank you for the member feedback I have received over the past year both positive and negative. I always enjoy hearing from the membership and wish more people would write in with their comments or perhaps letters to the editor for publishing. At least I know for sure that some of you are reading what we write up. Everyone take care and have an enjoyable summer.



**THE ZEPHYR-ROCKETS**

**Overnight between  
MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL and ST. LOUIS**

You'll thrill to a new travel experience when you ride these streamlined marvels of transportation. Sleek, fast, modern; they have the smooth, flowing power of mighty Diesels, and combine superb train comfort and refreshing smartness.

Roomy chair cars have deeply-cushioned, adjustable seats, spacious dressing rooms and subdued night lighting . . . Pullman sleeping cars feature double bedrooms as well as upper and lower berths.

Diner-parlor-observation cars are exquisitely appointed and offer delicious meals and buffet service at moderate prices.

Ride these new ZEPHYR-ROCKETS—No Extra Fare.

## Guest Editorial

# The Infrastructure of Railroad Preservation or, Rebelling Against the Cute

—B. Lamar Spruell

"Infrastructure" is a hot word in government these days. In English as opposed to bureaucratese, it literally means underpinnings— a word that anyone who spends a lot of time looking at the bottom of railroad cars should be able to grasp. Infrastructure is the foundation on which something is built. Take water supply systems, for example: they have reservoirs, pumping stations, pipe lines distribution stations. (That's why when you read about improving infrastructure, you should assume your taxes are about to go up.) Railroads are part of society's infrastructure too, since the country can't even feed itself without them.

But railroads aren't just trains. Railroads have their own infrastructure. The railroad sells transportation, but it produces train-miles in a factory that is spread out over thousands of miles. The transportation factory includes everything from rights-of-way and bridges to the crews' drinking water jugs. Now the purpose of railroad museums is to save some obsolete bits of this factory to show people how it used to be done. But which bits? Why should one part be more important than another as a tool for teaching history?

All parts of the railroad system were essential when they were built (or at least people thought they were). Maintenance and repair facilities were an unavoidable part of the transportation business; so were the car shops, the mail and express terminals, the icing stages, the coachyards, the freight houses, the water treatment plants the coal docks, the creosote plants, the stock watering yards, even the tiniest section-gang house. Car and engine shops ate up a lot of

money, and a lot of people worked there. But now, 40 years into the diesel age, railroad managements have learned that a machine shop can be replaced by a parts catalog or a contract-repair company, and most shops are gone.

A few shops have gone into the hands of railroad museums; the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, for example, uses the former Rio Grande round-house and shop facility at Chama, New Mexico. But existing railroad road shops owned by museums are an exception - which is too bad, because railroad museums need the same supporting structure as the railroads did. My organization, the Michigan State Trust for Railway Preservation, wound up with part of the Ann Arbor shop at Owosso, Michigan. The old building isn't real healthy- if someone gives you cheap rent on a backshop, you should try to see that it's from a railroad that's made money in living memory. But we do have one, and that makes us kind of special. Very few railroad museums prioritized backshops, and that's what I want to talk about.

Railroad museums tend to consist only of rolling stock, as if that's all there was to railroading. If a museum has anything else on display, it tends to be the romantic, the showy, or the cute. That's why people have hoarded five million kerosene lanterns, but none of the Pullman Company's special vacuum-cleaner attachments. Everyone seems to have a baggage wagon on display, but you have to really hunt to find a flue rattler.

Railroad fan's aren't the only history amateurs guilty of this misdirected focus. The mainstream history movement has the same problem. In towns all across America, you can find the big, Victorian house of the town's first rich guy, lovingly preserved by the local Historical society as a monument to the bad taste of the nouveau riche of 1892. But the factory that made him his money, and the little homes of the people who worked there were all flattened to make way for the new shopping mall.

Let's face it: historic preservation is a

spare-time activity of a small class of people, and the results show our prejudices. Industrial sites as a whole are ignored. For example, up in Petoskey in my home state of Michigan, you can find a whole town of preserved Victorian summer cottages, but no one noticed when Ephraim Shay's experimental machine shop was bulldozed for condo development. That's one less tie to the lumber economy that built that whole territory in the first place. But even museums of technology tend to love the cute. There must be 200 antique-car museums, but Travel Town in Los Angeles is the only museum I know of that saved the antique road-building machinery that built the roads those cars ran on.

There are two reasons railroad museums shouldn't neglect shop and terminal facilities. First, a museum composed only of rolling stock gives a wrong impression to visitors. It fails in the mission of a museum, because it doesn't give people a true idea of how the railroad business worked. Secondly, this type of museum doesn't have the tools it needs to maintain its rolling stock. Railroad museums need the same maintenance and support infrastructure that the railroad itself needed, if the equipment is to be maintained in accurate condition.

Let's look at the first of these points. When you mention trains to most people, they think of quaint passenger trains and uniformed conductors, red cabooses and chuffing steam engines - cute, but not what most of railroad-ing was about. Our museum operations don't do much to dispel this image. At an operating museum a train appears from nowhere, grinds to a halt, stops at the depot, and chuffs away. There's nothing to indicate who keeps it running. Years ago, people knew about engine terminals and yards. Probably their neighbor was a switchman or a boilermaker, and everyone knew where the shops were. So why should our operating museums concentrate on the conductor and not the boilermaker? Why should we tell the story of the engineer and not of the coach carpenter?

I think that one of the most important

lessons from railroad history is that wherever today we see a freeway, a truck terminal, a gas station, an airport, a delivery truck, an auto factory or a car dealer, that that business used to be accounted for by the railroad. If we could point this out to people, it would make them understand what a change the automobile has brought about in this country. Major technological changes are powerful history lessons, and understanding them prepares people for changes that are sure to continue in the future. That's what history lessons are supposed to do: prepare people for change. Remember, all those boilermakers' jobs vanished overnight. There's a lesson there if we can get it across: just because an institution is big and has been there 100 years doesn't mean it can't vanish without a trace and change a lot of people's lives in the process. But people won't grasp this point unless we can show them just how huge and intricate an industry railroads used to be.

The second point, and the one of immediate importance to museum operators, is that railroad museums have the same maintenance needs as the railroads themselves. Especially if we hope to operate historic equipment— and operating it and selling tickets seems to be the only way to raise the money to preserve the stuff— we will have to turn wheels, inspect running gear, paint cars, and about a thousand other jobs.

Recently a fellow showed up at our shop complaining about the time and money we spend on the building, and wanting to know why we just didn't take our engine out and run it. He accused us of concentrating more on the shop than on the engine, and we don't deny that. I don't want to claim that we had a grand plan in mind when we moved 2-8-4 No 1225 to the Owosso shop; we just got lucky when we went looking for a place to park the engine and found one. But since we arrived here, we've discovered that the shop really is more important than the locomotive: if you have a good shop and good people, you can rebuild almost any old boat anchor. But if all you have is junk and no shop, boy, are you in deep. . . uh,

trouble. So we have no apologies about having more people at work on the shop and on the machine tools than on the locomotive. We know we're still ahead of where we'd be without the equipment. We're ahead in the time it takes us to get things done, and we're ahead in money, relative to contracting for everything. Of course, it can be done without a shop on the site, but that requires more money. You have to have one or the other, and of the two, a shop will get you through times of no money better than money will get you through a time without a shop.

The right tools and a place to work are especially important to volunteer organizations. The thing that attracts volunteers is the sense that they're accomplishing something grand, and they won't keep coming back if you don't equip them with the tools to do the job. No one likes beating his head against a wall. There is no more pathetic spectacle than dedicated volunteers trying to resurrect old equipment with inadequate tools, like rebuilding a steam engine with a set of socket wrenches, or painting a passenger car with a department store belt sander and power painter.

So I regard some sort of shop as an absolute essential. For locomotives, it's written into the Federal Railroad Road Administration regulations. When we "made a federal engine" out of No 1225, that is, submitted the forms that would enter it into the FRA's records, we requested that an FRA inspector come out and inspect the engine. The first thing the inspector asked was not "what shape is the engine in", but "Do you have it over a pit". He was more interested in what kind of shop we had than what kind of engine we had.

None of this is easy or cheap. Establishing a railroad restoration shop is desperately difficult, and it's going to get harder to find the old buildings and more costly to run them. In the near future, we're going to run into tighter regulations governing such obscure things as "cradle-grave tracking" of solvents, "fugitive dust" from sandblasting, Diesel-oil spillage, and release of

asbestos particles— all things basic to the historic railroad business, and all of which restrict our freedom to locate and operate our shops. So sandblast that coach now, while you still can without enclosing the whole thing in a giant vacuum cleaner bag.

The attitude toward shop facilities may be a way to recognize the class of people that I consider the pros in this business. The ones I know go to machinery auctions. At a gathering of railroad fans, they won't be talking about No 611 or No 3985; they'll be talking about Bridgeport mills and Bullard lathes. They know that without these essential tools, the historic equipment is effectively already gone— it just may not have been cut up yet. For example, many people regarded it as a tragedy when Grand Trunk Western No 5629 was cut up in 1987. But in reality, the tragedy occurred in 1959 when it was sold to a person with no resources; it just took 30 years for reality to catch up.

There is a tendency in this business that makes people get a vacant field and cram it full of random railroad equipment, and call it a railroad museum. This is easy and cheap to do— often it takes no more than sending a few letters, and the cars and locomotives show up on your doorstep. Every club seems to have one person who specializes in promoting gifts of "free" junk, but who is never any good at locating free carpenters, welders or painters. No one thinks about the maintenance burden that comes with the rolling stock. This is one of the things that separates the pros from the amateurs: the Illinois Railway Museum for example, won't accept donated equipment without an endowment to construct a shelter and maintain the piece. The IRM knows that without an investment in maintenance, the whole show is temporary. At best, it's a holding action against the faint possibility that maybe, someday, the tools will be there to bring the equipment back after years of deterioration. Not a good situation when you're supposed to be preserving artifacts forever.

That's why when someone tells me that he's got a railroad museum, my

reaction is to ask, "So where's your carpenter shop, your wheel pit, your sandblast shed, your paint shop, your upholstery shop and your machine shop?" Without these things he hasn't got a railroad museum. At best he's got a giant outdoor storage closet. Maybe he's got the scrapyard of the future.

So let's broaden the focus of the railroad museum movement. Let's have fewer telegraph keys and more turret lathes. Let's let people see guys cleaning out smokeboxes as well as punching tickets. Let's tell the whole story of the railroad business.

**B. Lamar Spruell** is a civil engineer who devotes his retirement to the study of museum-management practice. He is associated with the Michigan State Trust for Railway Preservation's restoration of Pere Marquette 2-8-4 No 1225 in Owosso, Michigan.

*Reprinted with permission from the January-February 1989 Locomotive & Railway Preservation*



## Board of Directors

### February 1989

1) Agreed to purchase 20 copies of the 1989 "Steam Passenger Directory" to allow CHSL and Stillwater to be listed. 2) Voted to accept donation of ex-Metra EMD E-8 provided it was not an ex-CNW "Crandall Cab" unit. 3) Voted to accept budget for Jackson Street Roundhouse. 4) Voted to table Railroad budget. 5) Agreed to

## Presidents Message

On April 1st, **Jeff Garry, Hudson Leighton**, and I, attended a symposium entitled, "Railway Preservation in the '80's" at the California State Railway Museum in Sacramento. Several issues raised by the speakers are well worth repeating.

I was most impressed with what **William Withuhn** of the Smithsonian had to say. His theme had to do with the maturity, or lack thereof, within the railway preservation movement. He felt that serious preservationists, those who think two or three generations into the future, are grossly outnumbered by the many who want the immediate thrill of running old equipment but don't look beyond that. Up to a point, there's nothing wrong with playing train, but we need to look further to the tough issues of the future. The equipment must be housed in order to stop its deterioration. That is a huge job in itself.

Then comes the daunting, painstaking task of restoration, fully documented so future generations know what took place. Yet it doesn't end there. The next step is display or operation within a proper interpretative setting. All this needs to be thought through, planned carefully, and carried out in an organized manner. Consider how difficult that can be in the context of a democratic, volunteer, organization like MTM, where money and energy are always in short supply.

Withuhn counseled the audience to look outside the railfan community for support of all kinds, including government assistance. The historic preservation movement nationwide covers many segments including,

architecture, ships, planes, and clothing to name a few. It's a growing phenomenon throughout our society, and rail preservation is growing with it. Notice though, that some segments have been much more visible than others and have gathered broad community support that puts them in another league altogether. He pointed to cities that have adopted a particular ship as a civic symbol and underwritten the restoration.

The rail preservation movement however, has been very self contained. It's almost a secret, Withuhn says. He mentioned that the National Trust for Historic Preservation, clearly the most important organized force in the nation, knows little about rail subjects and has had almost no involvement.

What can be done? On the local level, MTM needs to strengthen its ties with the state, county, and local historical societies, as well as the local governments and their historic preservation agencies. The payoff will be more members, more financial and nonfinancial support, and I believe, a position of some esteem within the community. Ultimately, more rail equipment will be preserved, and the future will be more secure.

These two or three pages of the Minnegazette are usually full of pleas for increased member participation. Well, here's another. Please help me form a community outreach team, to go speak to all those people and institutions listed above. The message is that we're here, we're a resource for the community, and we'd like them to join with us. Call me anytime. ☺

inspect **Bob Mc Nattin's** ex-EL commuter coaches for possible lease for Stillwater.

### March 1989

1) Voted to request **Bob Ball** to submit a letter of intent regarding a joint Northstar Chapter NRHS/ MTM excursion on the Wisconsin Central in May. 2) Voted to sell a propane ice engine, generator and diesel locomotive cab heaters to Duluth. 3) Voted

to accept portions of the Railroad budget but not the entire document.

4) Agreed to turn down the donation offer by College of St Catherine of their 100hp stationary steam standby power plant.

### April 1989

1) Approved a revised traction budget

2) Discussed the Museum's Long Range Plan

## Traction Division

The silence at first, was awesome. It was broken only by the occasional roar of a commanding voice, and slowly paced clicking sounds common to a ratchet like device.

Then, hushed voice tones become apparent, while external sounds remain non-existent. Time stretches on, the suspense is overwhelming. More clicks, and another roar!

Is it the arrival of the PCC cars, you ask? No, it's not a winch easing one onto the tracks. The PCC's remain victims of indecision resulting from Shaker Heights' problem plagued transit system.

Click! Click!

Is it the beginning of construction of the Linden Hills Station then? No, it's not the boom arm of a delivery truck unloading concrete block or sheet rock. The Park Board's approval to proceed is official. Finally! Construction details remain to be completed by the Construction Management team. Work will begin mid-Spring.

ROAR!

Is it the training class for this year's new streetcar operator candidates? No, it's not the projection equipment displaying our new, high-tech, ultra creative training program. Classes and hands-on training are scheduled to be held immediately prior to the CHSL Operating Exhibit opener on Memorial day weekend. Preparations for the Exhibit operation are underway, everything will be in place with ample time to spare.

A click, a roar, and another click! The silence, the suspense, both will last only a few more agonizing moments. Click! Click! Click! Click! The last jack is removed, and the commanding voice roars, **"THANK YOU, GUYS! IT'S A JOB WELL DONE!". HURRAH!**

DSR No 78 has been trucked! The superstructure and truck assembly are united as one. 🚚

## Railroad Division

Hopefully more people will be inclined to come out and lend a hand now that spring and warmer weather is near. We still have a lot to accomplish before May. The work on locomotive LST&T No 105 is underway but still far from finished. CRI&P No 2608 needs more work before it will be ready for service this summer. Both interior, exterior, and mechanical work remain to be done. GN coach No 1213 will also need some attention if it is expected to run at Stillwater this summer. As soon as we get Stillwater's train running we can return our efforts to further construction on our new shop.

Speaking of the shop, once the snow has melted and the mud dries up a bit, we'll be able to finish ballasting and tamping the new track along with installing switch stands, and extending track five along the south side of the building. We also will begin our clean-up of the back yard so that by mid-summer we can open up the place on Sunday afternoons to the public.

NP 328 has been going through its usual winter maintenance program and will be in excellent shape for this summer's excursion schedule. While no definite plans have been reached yet, NP 2156 may be moved to the shop from the Minnesota Commercial later this summer or early fall so restoration work can be resumed on the locomotive. In addition, trucks and air brake equipment for Minneapolis Northfield and Southern private car "Gopher" have been acquired and by the end of the summer it should also be residing at Jackson Street Roundhouse.

As you can see we have a busy spring ahead of us. If you would like to see a reliable train operation at Stillwater this summer, please come out and lend a hand now so when May rolls around we won't be scrambling to get things done. Thanks to all who have been diligently working on restoration and maintenance throughout the cold winter months. Without your efforts we would not have an operating railroad museum. 🚂

## Stillwater Division

Preparation continues as the Memorial Day start of operations bears down on us. Equipment is still a question mark. Substantial progress has been made on CRI&P No 2608 at Jackson Street Roundhouse. It has received new windows, rebuilt seats, and an interior paint job. The other Rock Island coach, No 2604, down at Stillwater is getting brake work. It will need a thorough cleaning after sitting out all winter. The plan calls for GN coach No 1213 to return to Stillwater.

Although it isn't confirmed at this time, MTM may lease one or two ex-Erie Lackawana commuter coaches owned by member **Bob McNattin** and stored at Northfield. These cars date from the 1920's and would need quite a bit of interior work. The overall concern is to have enough equipment to handle the expected demand.

SW-1200 diesel, LST&T No 105, will be the primary power this summer. A considerable amount of repair work took place this winter, both by volunteers and paid mechanics. NP No 328 will come out July 20th for Lumberjack Days and is expected to stay one month.

MTM has made an agreement with the Gasthaus Bavarian Hunter restaurant for joint luncheon-charter events. The Gasthaus is located a block south of the Lofton Avenue grade crossing. They would sell a package including a round trip train ride on Sundays only. Passengers would board at the new stop to be called "Voligny" in honor of the late **Doris Voligny**.

We still hope to do the Duluth Junction extension and runaround track sometime this summer as money becomes available. Other planned improvements include the berming, fencing, and final cleanup and tree planting at Summit required in the Stillwater Township agreement.


Track Foreman **Mortgen Jorgensen** says that regular track and maintenance-of-way crews will meet at Countryside Towing every Tuesday at

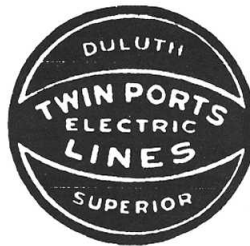
5:30 pm and Saturday's at 9:00 am. Attention is being directed first towards brush cutting in order to improve visibility at the 12 grade crossings along the line. Later, work will include tie replacement and other jobs that can be handled without calling in **Ken Benedict's** professional crew.

Publicity Committee Chairman, **John Dillery**, and the committee have laid out an advertising plan that is much more ambitious and comprehensive than last year. It will include extensive use of press releases and free newspaper and magazine event calendars, as well as paid advertising in the St Paul and Minneapolis newspapers.

Over 30 members have successfully passed the Burlington Northern General Code of Operating Rules Test for operating crew members, according to Executive Vice President, **Ward Gilkerson**. **Bill Bruce** has compiled a roster of over 50 car attendants and ticket agents. A training course for those positions will be held

May 6th. **John Stein** has produced a comprehensive timetable for Stillwater that covers every aspect of operations, including the handling of emergencies.

If you're planning to work at Stillwater, be aware that Saturday has been divided into two shifts to avoid burning out crews. Sundays will continue to be a single shift. It's not too late to put your name on the roster. Call **DuWane Shogren**, **Tom Dethmers**, **Ward Gilkerson**, or **Bill Bruce** if you're interested. 



## Duluth Street Railway No 265 Gets a New Ride

—George K. Isaacs

When Duluth Street Railway No 265 was placed in revenue service on the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line we were all elated that there was now a second operable car as an alternative to TCRT No 1300. We had taken a summer cottage from Solon Springs, Wisconsin, a pair of trailer trucks from a Chicago Transit Authority class 4000 subway car, and motors, gears, and wheels from TCRT No 20 steeple cab locomotive and crafted them into an operable car.

Yes, an operable car it was, but how did it operate compared to No 1300? Ask any CHSL operator and they would say that the car was too slow in

### Minnesota Transportation Museum Railroad Crew Roster General Code Qualified as of May 1, 1989

#### Engineers

Jeff Garry  
Scott Heiderich  
Ray Reardon  
Dave Rushenberg  
Mike Schmitz  
Keith Skevik  
John Stein  
John Winter  
Tony Becker

#### Fireman

Bill Bruce  
Dick Fish  
Ward Gilkerson  
Wendell Gilkerson  
Greg Koon  
Rodney Kriesel  
Dave Lankinen  
Nick Modders  
Art Pew  
Lee Rushenberg  
Larry Schulte

#### Conductors

Bill Bruce  
Dick Fish  
Jeff Garry  
Ward Gilkerson  
Wendell Gilkerson  
Scott Hederich  
Greg Koon  
Rodney Kriesel  
Nick Modders  
Art Pew  
Mike Schmitz  
DuWane Shogren  
Keith Skevik  
John Stein  
Dave Rushenberg  
Lee Rushenberg  
John Winter

#### Brakeman

Fred Beamish\*  
Bill Bruce  
Jim Burt\*  
Brian Dole\*  
Dick Fish

Jeff Garry  
Ward Gilkerson  
Wendell Gilkerson  
Scott Hederich  
Frank Jordan\*  
Morten Jorgensen\*  
Greg Koon  
Rodney Kriesel  
Dave Lankinen  
Frank Lotterle\*  
Hudson Leighton\*  
Marv Mahre\*  
Nick Modders  
Gary Ostrand\*  
Art Pew  
Carol Poquette\*  
Dave Rushenberg  
Lee Rushenberg  
Mike Schmitz  
Larry Schulte\*  
DuWane Shogren  
Keith Skevik  
John Stein  
Greg Taylor\*  
John Winter

\* Student Brakeman

the fifth running notch and it rode very hard at all speeds. We lived with those shortcomings for the next seven years.

Last fall the museum members who keep the cars operating attacked both the speed problem, and the hard riding, respectively.

First to speed up No 265 it was decided to install a field shunting circuit to make the motors run faster while in the fifth notch. Field shunting occurs with the movement of the controller drum into the fifth position. This closes a switch and energizes a relay (electro magnetic switch) connecting a power resistor in parallel with each of the two motor field windings. This connection shunts or bypasses about one fourth of the current that normally passes through the field winding. This, in turn, weakens the field magnetism which causes the armature, and therefore the wheels, to turn faster to maintain the electrical balance (counter EMF) of the motor.

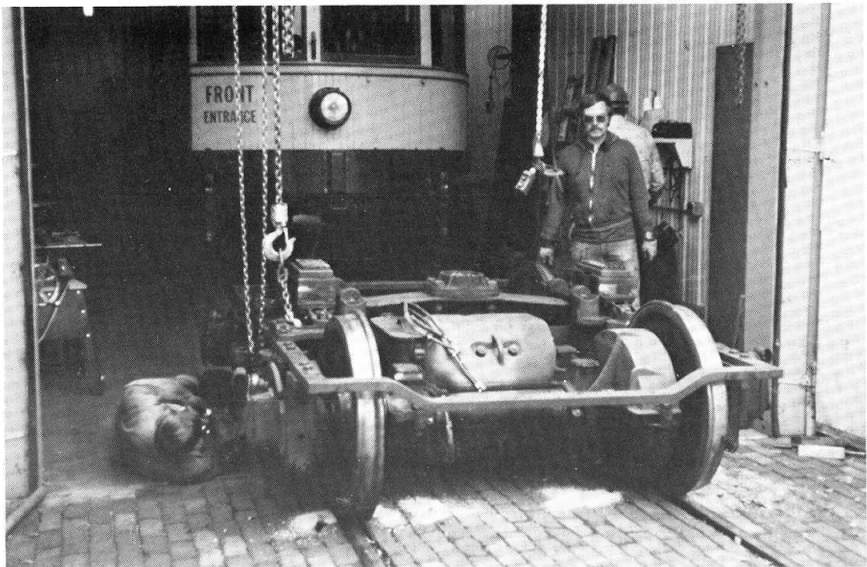
The field shunting added about three miles per hour to the top speed of No 265, equaling the top speed of No 1300. (Now if we could only shunt some of the sales pitches given at the north end of the line.)

The cause of the hard riding on No 265 was due to the leaf spring being too stiff for the weight of the car body. The stiff leaf springs made the truck bolster solid with the truck frame transmitting all rail shocks to the car body.

To weaken the leaf springs, eight per truck, it was necessary to remove the springs and cut off both sides of the two outer leafs at their base. To do the job required that the car be jacked up and the truck removed from under the car and be partially disassembled.

The job took two Saturdays in October, one truck being changed at a time.

The crew consisted of **Bill Cordes, Roy Harvey, Al Jensen, Karl Jones, Loren Martin, Russ Olsen, Bob Schumacher, Walt Strobel,** and **George Isaacs.** We were also helped



**Top: Al Jensen works on swing link bolts while Karl Jones looks on, October 1, 1989.**

**Bottom: George Isaacs and Russ Olson disconnect front motor prior to removing the truck from the car. (MTM Col.)**

**Larry Dunwoody**, retired welding foreman from Onan.

While disassembled the truck was cleaned and all the moving parts lubricated.

The results of all the efforts is a car that runs faster and definitely rides easier. Come on out this summer and enjoy DSR No 265's new ride. 🚂

## Light Rail Vehicle Demonstration Postponed

—George K. Isaacs

Many of you have heard about the proposal to operate a San Jose Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) on our line at Lake Harriet. The idea was first put forth in early 1988 during the formation of a Light Rail Transit (LRT) Ad Hoc Committee of the Regional Transit Board (RTB). The opportunity to obtain the loan of a LRV occurred when the Santa Clara County Transportation Agency accepted delivery of 50 cars, but due to circumstances beyond their control, the LRT line was only half finished.



**Top:** Left to right; Greg Andrews, Elliott Perovich, Aaron Isaacs, Donald Harrison, P.E., Director of Marketing, LRT Systems UTDC Inc. (George Isaacs Photo) **Bottom:** San Jose LRV No 804 and the special tractor trailer rig used to haul the LRV. (Can Car Division of UTDC Inc Photo)

The designer and builder of the LRV's, Urban Transit Development Corporation of Thunder Bay, Ontario, made two visits to Minneapolis to ride and inspect the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line for track geometry and condition. Needless to say both of the visiting engineers were impressed with our track work and the orderliness of the grounds. For both visits **Roy Harvey** made sure that everything, including 1300, was neat and ready to go.

The problem of current collection by

pantograph on overhead designed for trolley wheel operation was addressed. **George Isaacs** designed an adapter to be secured to the pantograph's collection bars which allowed a trolley wheel and harp to move laterally 32 inches to follow the wire and also lift the pulloff ears that secure the wire, clear of the pan. A trip to Thunder Bay to consult with their engineer secured their approval of our collection scheme.

The next item on the agenda was a trip to San Jose by **George Isaacs**,

and the chair of the RTB, **Elliott Perovich**, to explain our demonstration to the general manager and light rail staff of the San Jose LRT operation. We were helped immeasurably by showing a portion of the CHSL training video produced by Mike Buck. Again the folks from San Jose were impressed by our track work. Our proposal for a demonstration of LRV operation at CHSL met with their approval, although we had to promise that we would not plow snow with their car. Oh yes, we had planned the six day demonstration during the week of March 20 while the State Legislature was in session.

While in San Jose we met with PTNR, the company that owned the special tractor-trailer combination that was built to transport completed two section LRV's. Their rig, complete with a San Jose LRV loaded, would measure 104 feet long, 10 feet wide, and 17 feet 4 inches high. It was our hope that the LRV could be trucked straight to Minneapolis with just one roll on, roll off operation at each end. The lack of a truck route offering the necessary clearances led to the postponement of the LRV demonstration.

Following the unsuccessful search for a truck route, PTNR negotiated a tariff with the Union Pacific Railroad which had a rail equipped trailer train flat that would handle a LRV. The total cost to just move the LRV on a rail car, the empty tractor-trailer, an equipment truck, and an escort car was \$85,000 round trip. At this point the project was put on hold. Later the railroad reduced their tariff significantly but the interval of time left to plan the demonstration, build temporary platforms and an accessible ramp, and adequately publicize the event had become too short. **George Isaacs**, as the jack-of-all-trades on this project had firm plans to visit Eastern Europe in early April so the demonstration could not be rescheduled until he returned.

By the time you read this article we should know if we are to have an LRV demonstration on the CHSL this summer or early fall. ☹️

## Before the "Geep" The EMD NW-5

—Jeffrey Braun

While the era of superpower steam was still well under way, the transition from steam to diesel locomotion already had a strong foothold in the North American railroad industry. Electro Motive Division began barnstorming the country with its new model FT type diesel in 1940 with great success. The steam locomotive builders, apparently seeing the writing on the walls, scrambled to introduce diesel lines of their own.

Despite the popularity of the EMD "covered wagons" (as the carbody type units became known), American Locomotive Company introduced a new type of locomotive in 1941, the road switcher. Before 1940, diesels were almost exclusively yard switchers except for the streamlined diesel passenger trains of the 1930's. The FT type was the first diesel really intended for heavy road service other than yard switching. While FT's generally consisted of two cab units and a pair of booster units semi-permanently coupled together, the new road switcher was a single unit. ALCO's challenge to EMD, the RS-1.

The new RS-1 was basically a yard switcher on a lengthened frame with road trucks and a short hood added behind the cab capable of housing a steam generator for passenger service. The new road switcher had many advantages over the EMD covered wagons. First, its design allowed better visibility. Also, besides being suitable for freight, passenger, or yard service the road switcher could be operated in single or multiple units which enhanced its versatility. It was clear that ALCO definitely had the right idea and if EMD was to remain competitive in the diesel market it would have to come out with a road switcher of its own.

Unfortunately for EMD, United States involvement in World War Two was increasing in the early 1940's. During World War Two the production of new diesel model lines was



**The F unit that started it all. North American railroads began to take dieselization seriously with the introduction of the EMD FT model pictured here by GN FT No 418. (Jeffrey Braun Collection)**

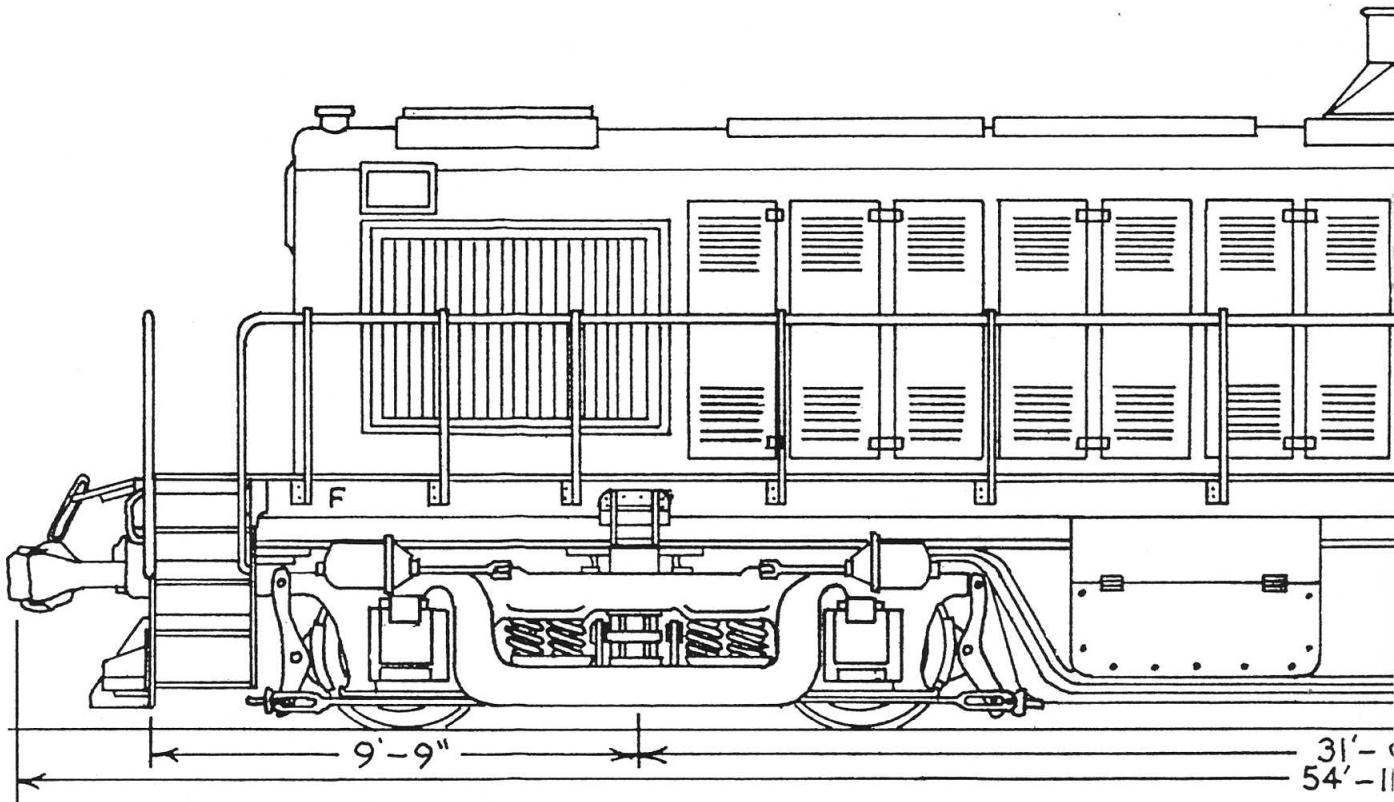


**GN Alco RS-1 in yard service. The new Alco concept of a road switcher combined three locomotives into one unit which increased its versatility. Both F units and steam locomotives, designed for special duties, were most often unsuitable in other service. (Jeffrey Braun Collection)**

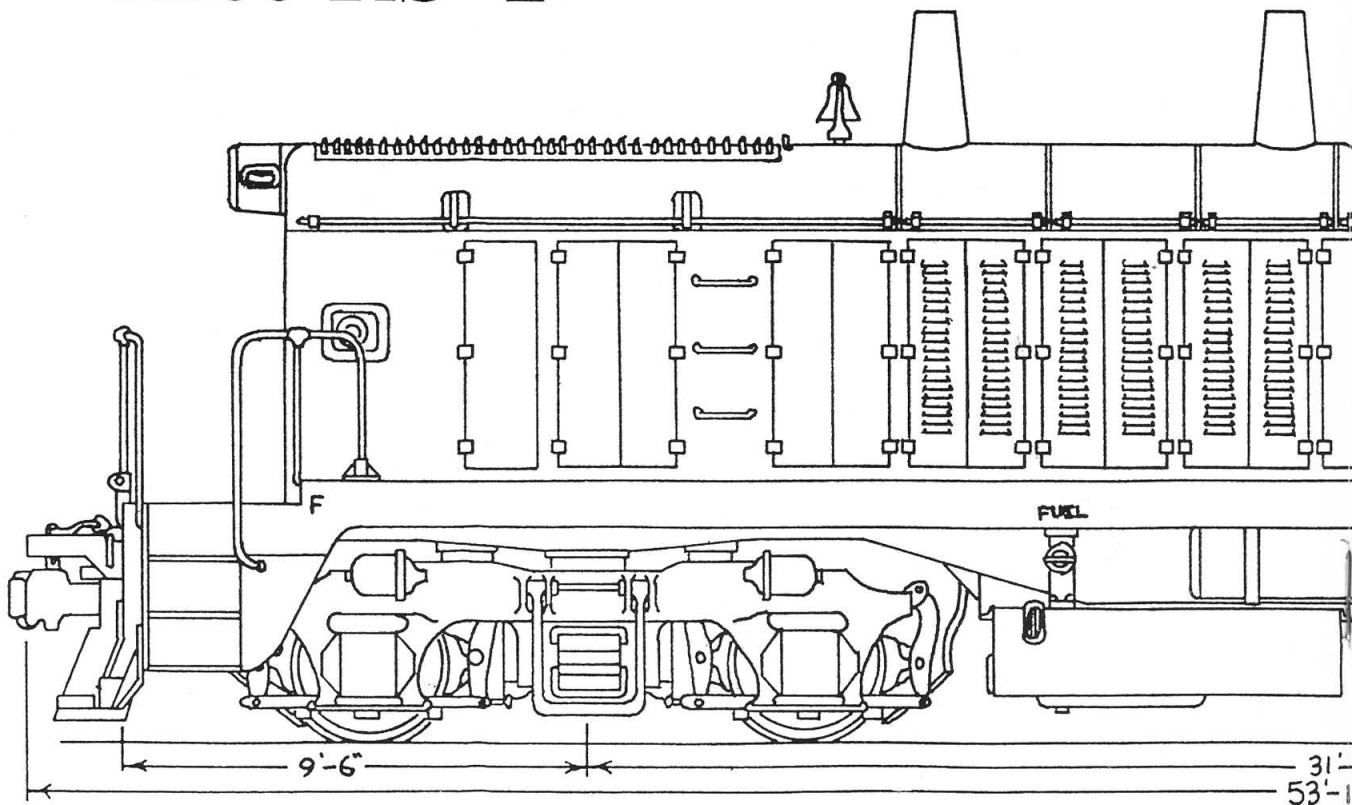
limited by the War Production Board to the models already on the market in an effort to conserve resources and even then not many new diesels were built with the exception of locomotives built for the military. EMD would just have to wait until after the war to counter Alco's RS-1. EMD did manage to build a preliminary road switcher type. Between 1939 and 1942 seven NW-3 type locomotives were built for the Great

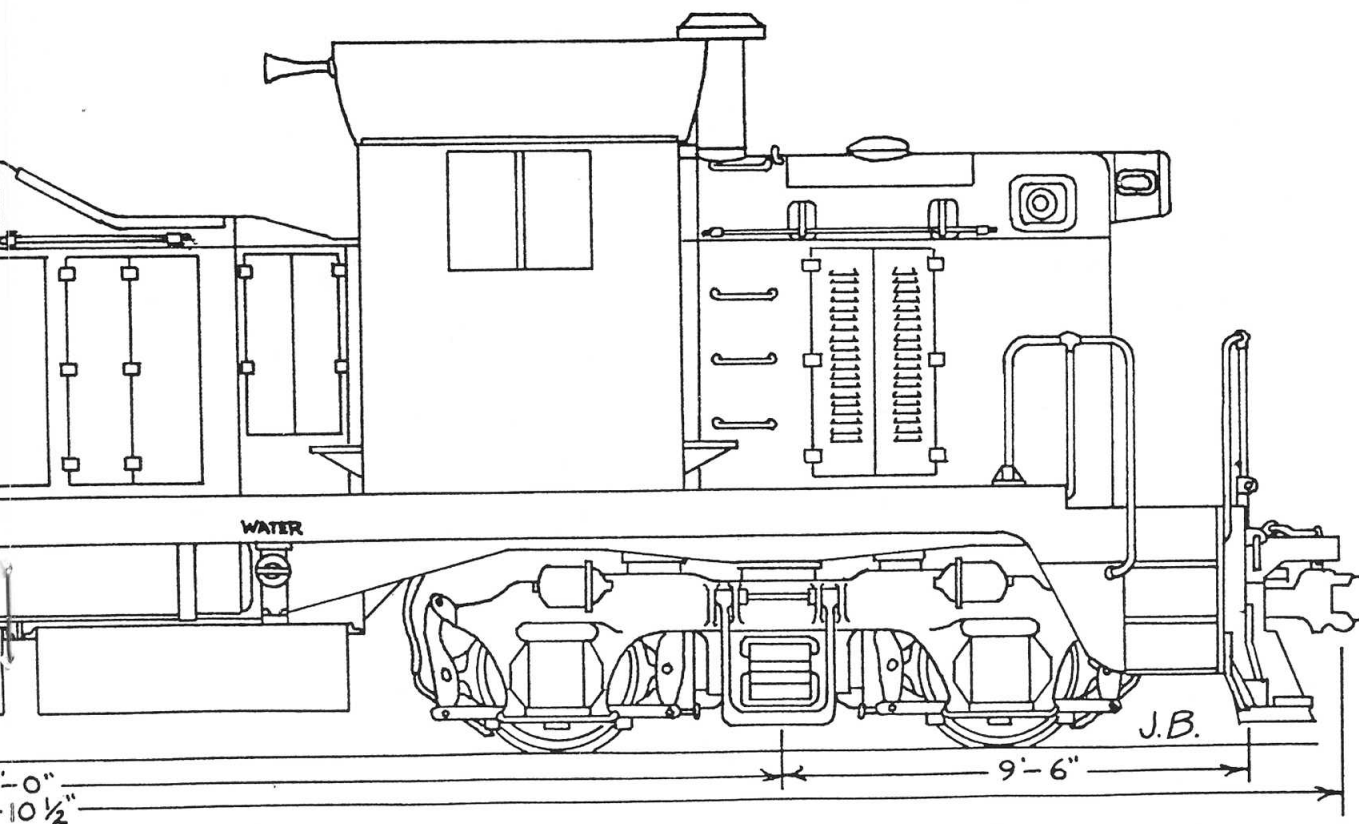
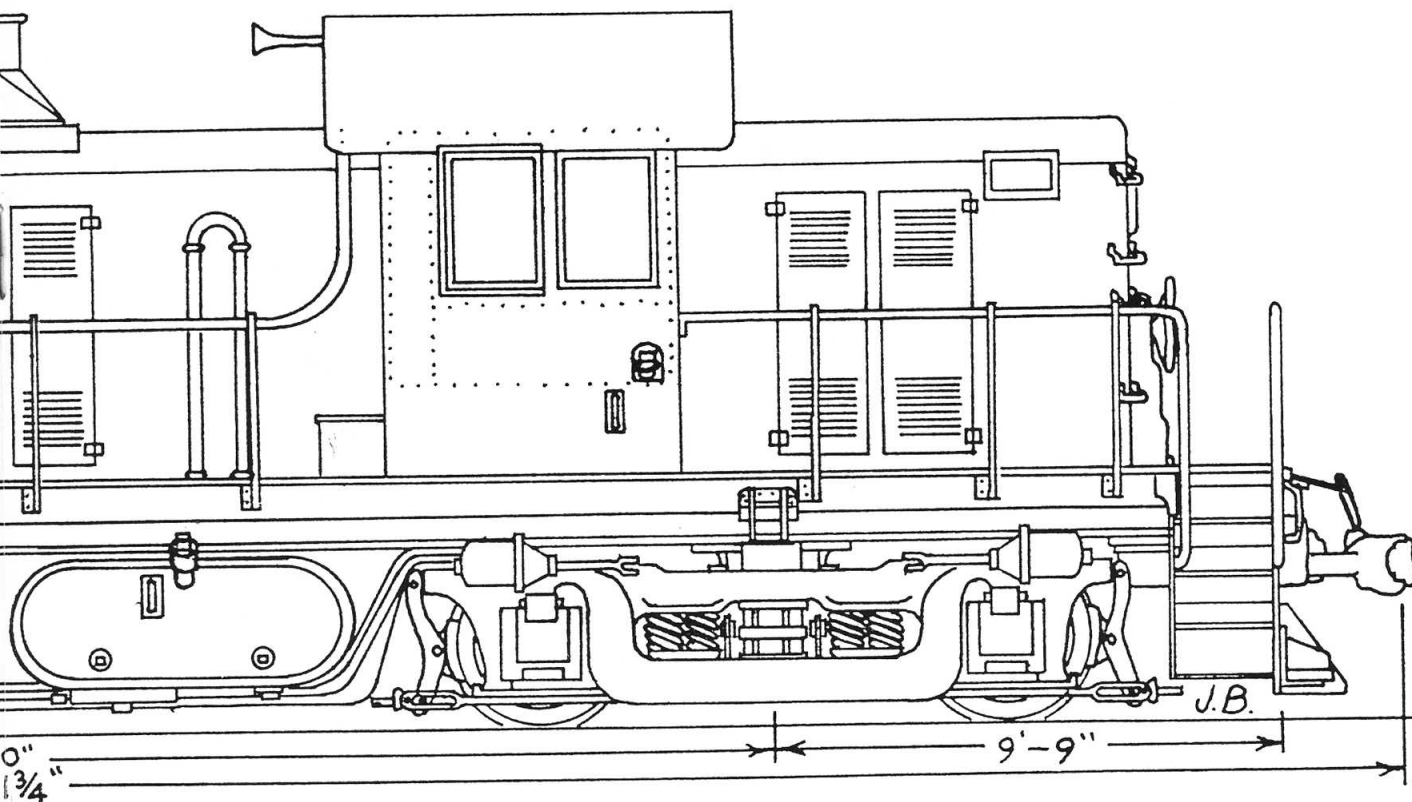
Northern Railway. Assigned road numbers 5400-5406 (later renumbered 175-181), the GN's new NW-3's could be called road switchers though they basically looked like long NW-2's with the mumps. They had road trucks like the F units and the hood was widened in front of the cab to house a steam generator giving the locomotive a rather unique appearance.

# Alco RS-1 versus the EMD NW-5

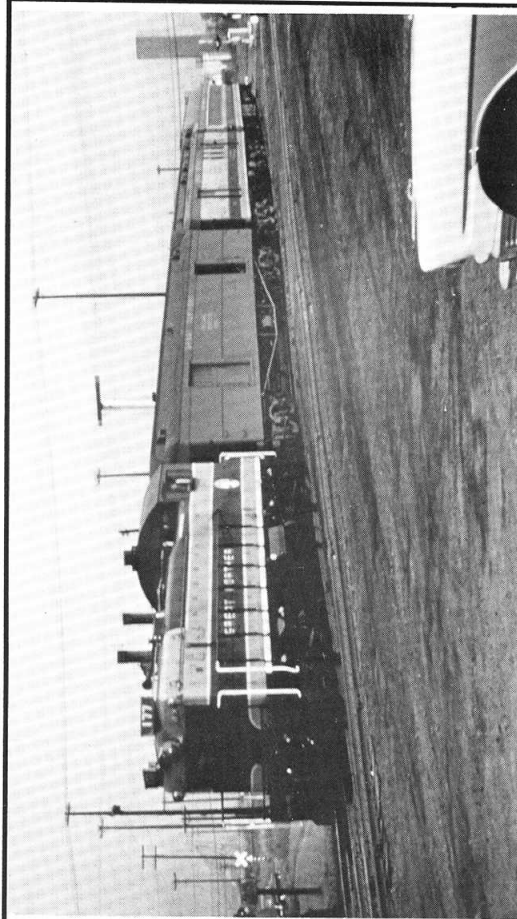
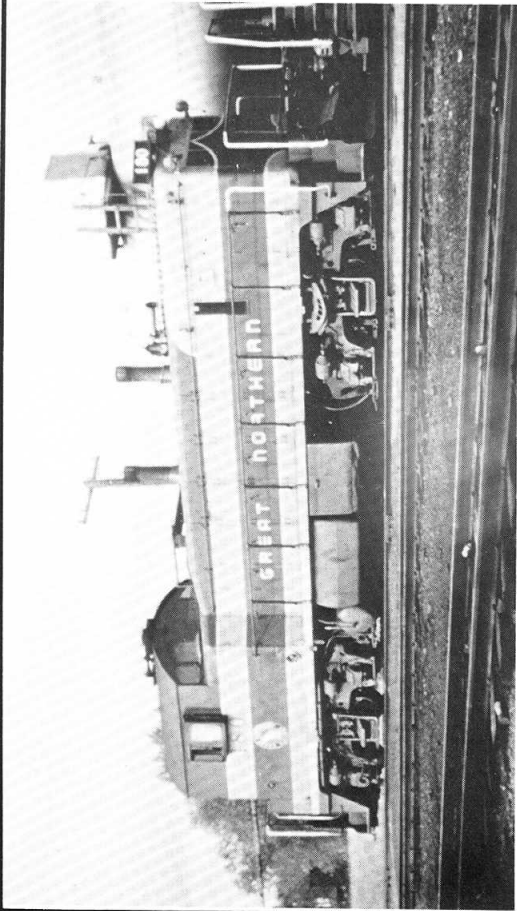


## Alco RS-1

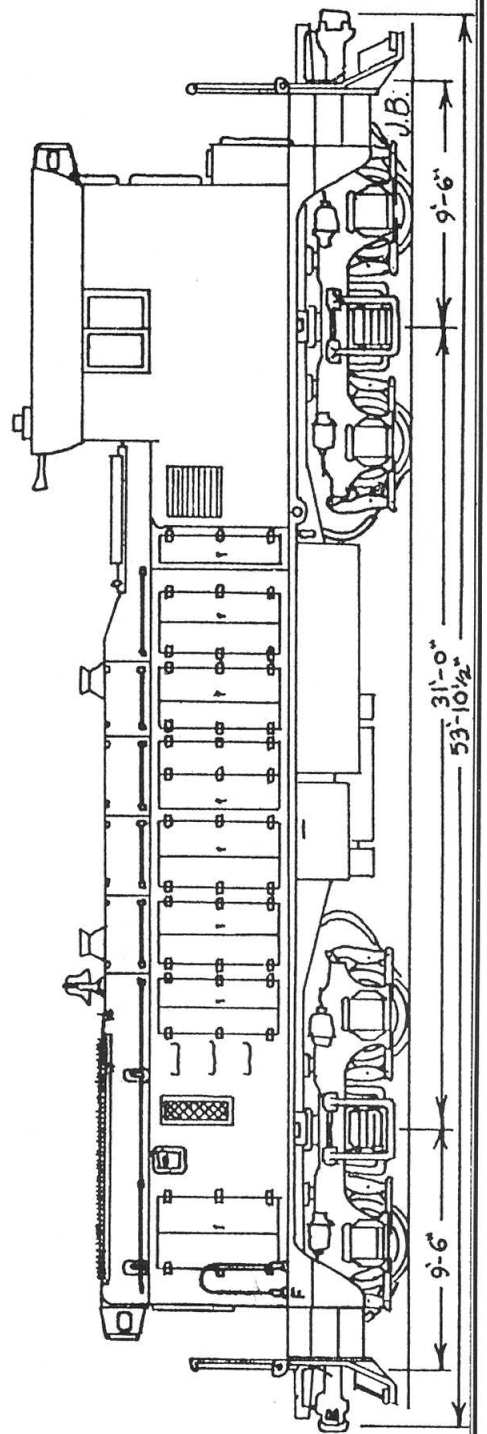
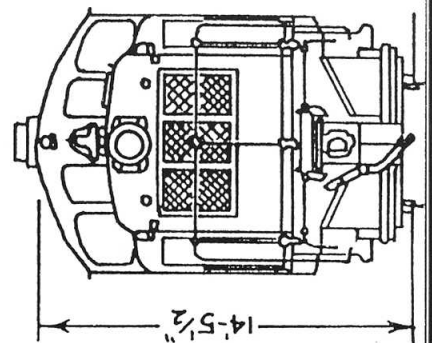
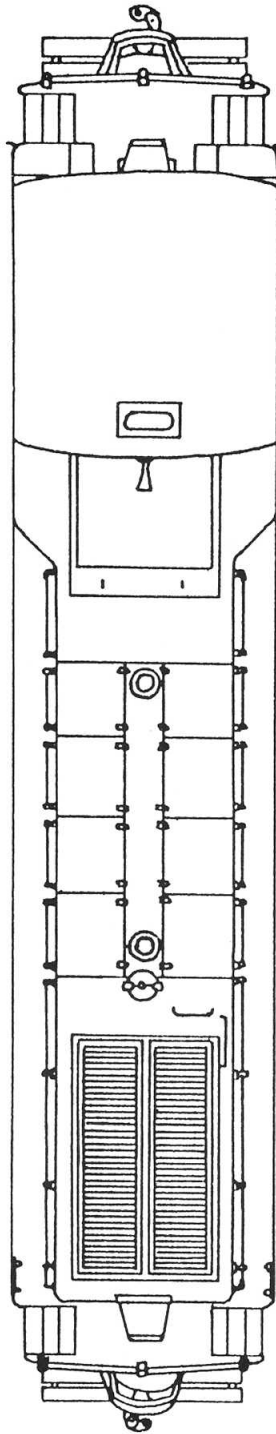
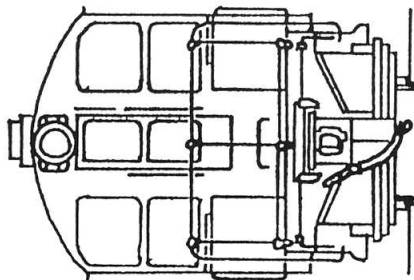




# EMD NW-5



Left: EMD NW-3 No 180 sits near the fuel rack sometime during the mid 1960's. Right: No 177 appears in this photo with a three car passenger local probably 1961 or '62. (Jeffrey Braun Collection)



It wasn't until 1946 that EMD seriously began to consider the road switcher after seeing the RS-1's popularity before and during the war. The new model, designated NW-5, even looked like the RS-1. After all it was built on the same idea. The new model NW-5 was just a NW-2 switcher with road trucks, a lengthened frame, and a short hood behind the cab for a steam generator, ala, ALCO RS-1. Thirteen were built between 1946 and 1947. Ten went to NW-3 customer, GN, No's 186-195, one to the Southern Railway, No 2100, and the remaining two to the Union Belt of Detroit as their No's 1 and 2.

The GN NW-5's seem to be the best documented and were favorites among local railfans. While most NW-5's on the GN traversed the light branchlines of North Dakota, at least

two were assigned to the Twin Cities. GN 186 held down the Minneapolis to Hutchinson, MN turn along with its odd caboose-baggage car No X-100 (latter renumbered X-181), and the 190 was the regular on the St Cloud to Minneapolis local. NW-5's also ventured into Fergus Falls, MN out of North Dakota on a regular basis. As far as I can tell only two resided in the Pacific Northwest, No's 187 and 188.

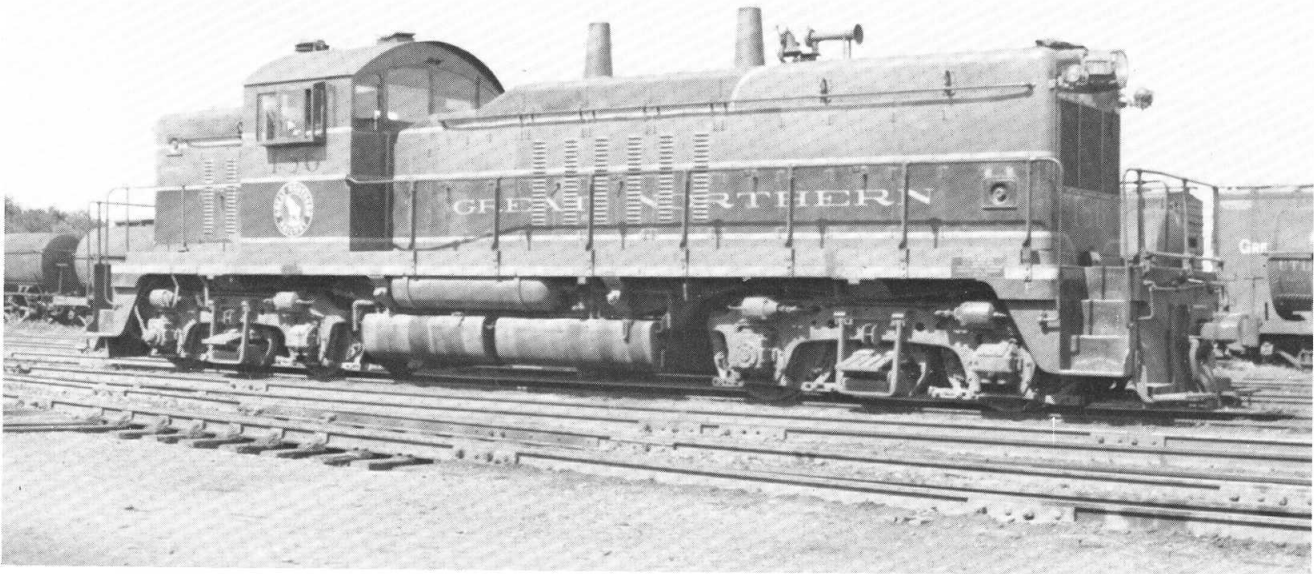
Originally intended to be used in passenger terminal switching, or on the GN's branchlines as passenger power like their NW-3 sisters, they soon lost their steam boilers and worked the branchlines in mixed and way freight service. Because of their light axle weight as compared to the newer EMD "Geeps" (as the new EMD general purpose GP type road switchers were now being called), they were

perfect for the job, replacing the aged Ten Wheelers and Consolidations on the old 60 and 70 pound rails of the Dakota branchlines. It was mostly due to this fact that the Burlington Northern kept these unique little locomotives on the roster well into the early 1980's while the earlier model NW-3's were retired by 1969, one year before the BN merger. (The NW-3's were assigned BN numbers but were sold just before the merger.)

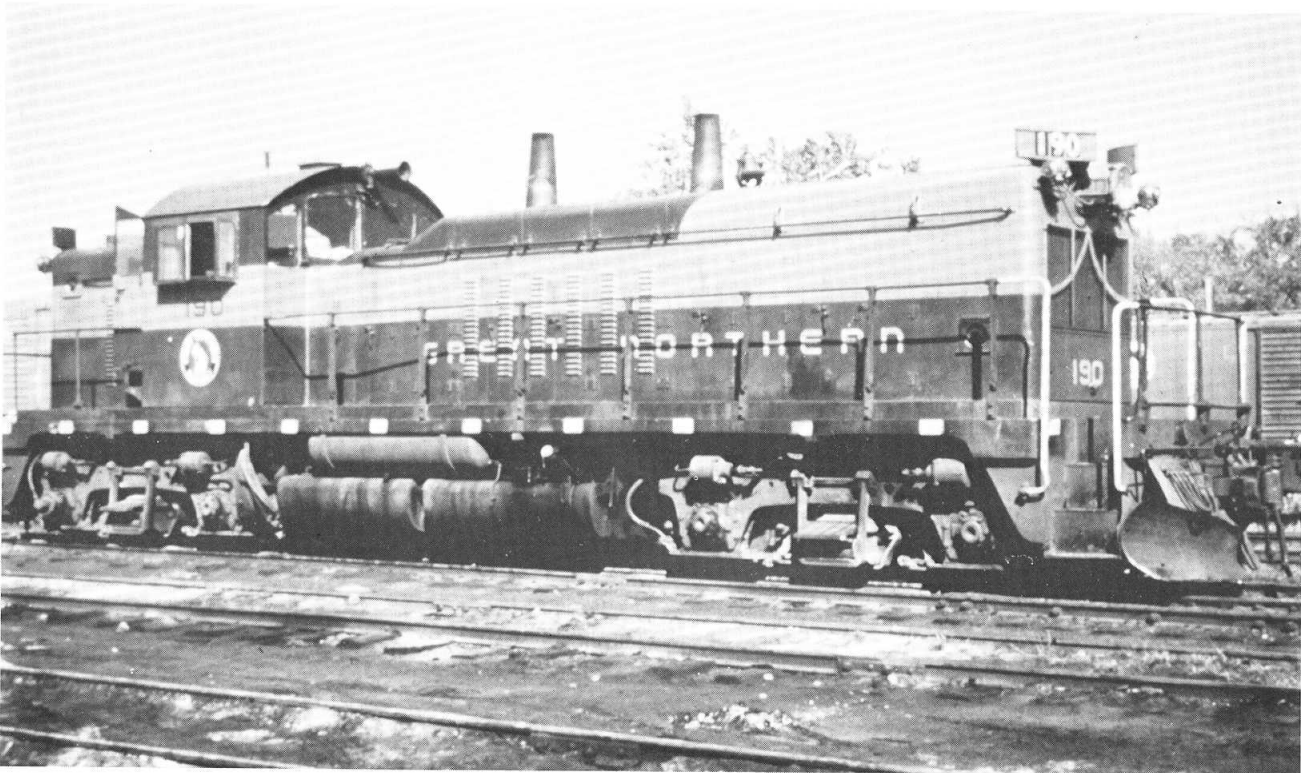
Oddly enough in this era of diesel preservation, no one has attempted to save either a NW-3 or NW-5 even though there are still a few left. These locomotives were just as important to dieselization as the Geeps and F units. Only time will tell if any of these or lesser known first generation diesels will be saved before its too late. 🚂

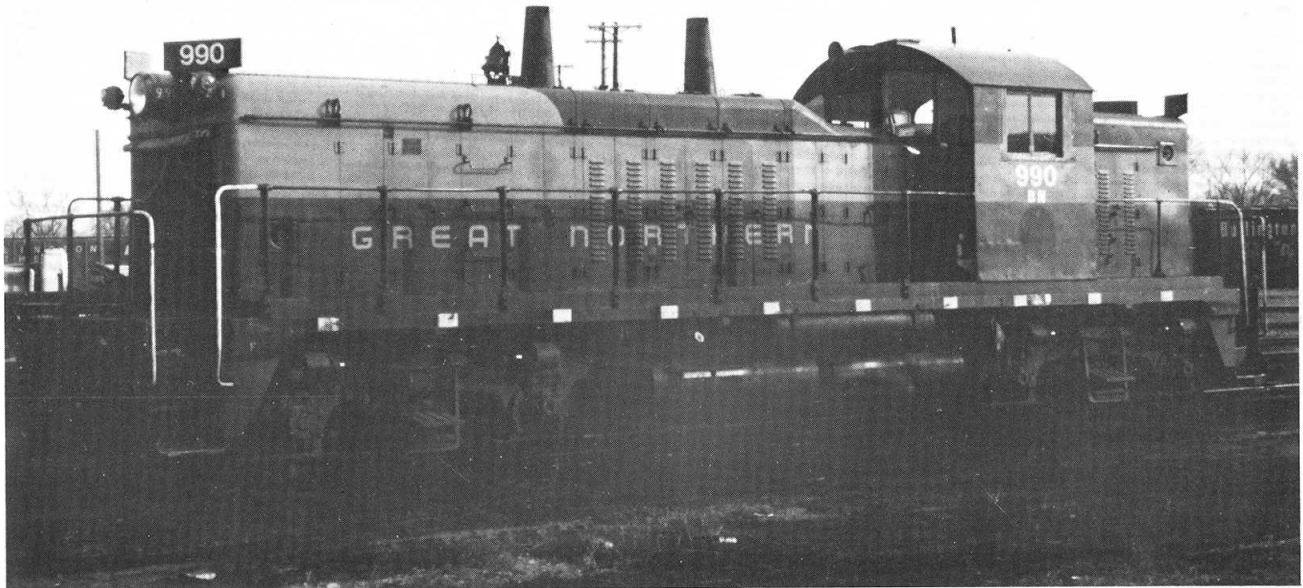


The popular EMD pre-war diesel switcher was the NW-2. A quick glance at the exhaust stacks and the moveable shutter mechanism on top of the hood mark GN No 110 as a pre-war model. The early EMD switchers had short exhaust stacks which were later extended by their owners. While the typical EMD switcher exhaust stacks of later models are conical, early models can be spotted by the fact that the base is tapered and then goes to a shotgun stack as on GN 110. Starting with the post-war NW-2's EMD began using the conical stacks and louvers as opposed to shutters atop the hoods. (Jeffrey Braun Collection)



Top: GN NW-5 No 186 sometime in the early 1950's. So far the only change appears to be the addition of full length handrails. 186 still sports its steam generator and original paint. GN 186 spent most of its career on the Hutchinson, MN branchline. Bottom: GN No 190 had seen over 20 years of service by the time this photo was taken. Quite a bit has changed over the years; she's lost her steam generator, acquired a snowplow, full length handrails, and now sports the simplified paint scheme of the 1960's. No 190 spent most of its time between St Cloud and the Twin Cities. (Both photos Jeffrey Braun Collection)





Top: All the GN NW-5's survived the Burlington Northern merger being renumbered from the 100's to the 900's. Many of the NW-5's kept their GN paint well into the mid-1970's like St Cloud engine No 190, now BN 990, shown around 1973. (Jeffrey Braun Collection) Bottom: It's a cold Thanksgiving day in 1978 and the crew is busy switching the old GN-NP interchange at Fergus Falls, MN. In about a half hour the train will head west of town for some more switching and then leave town on the old NP line to Breckenridge, MN for the return leg of the Fergus Falls-Breckenridge turn. Today Fergus Falls is served by the Ottertail Valley on the old GN and the old NP line only goes a few miles each way out of town. (Jeffrey Braun Photo)

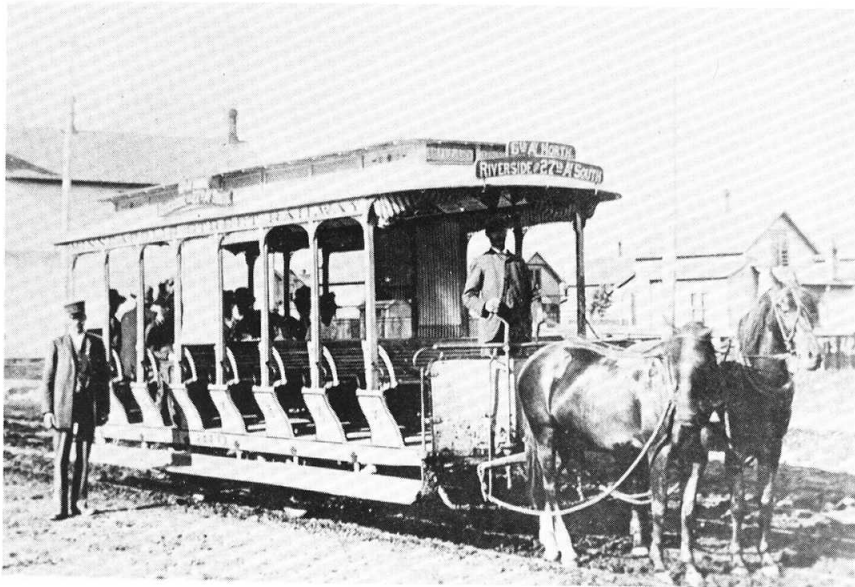


# 100 Years of Tom Lowry's "Big Yellow Cars" 1889 - 1989

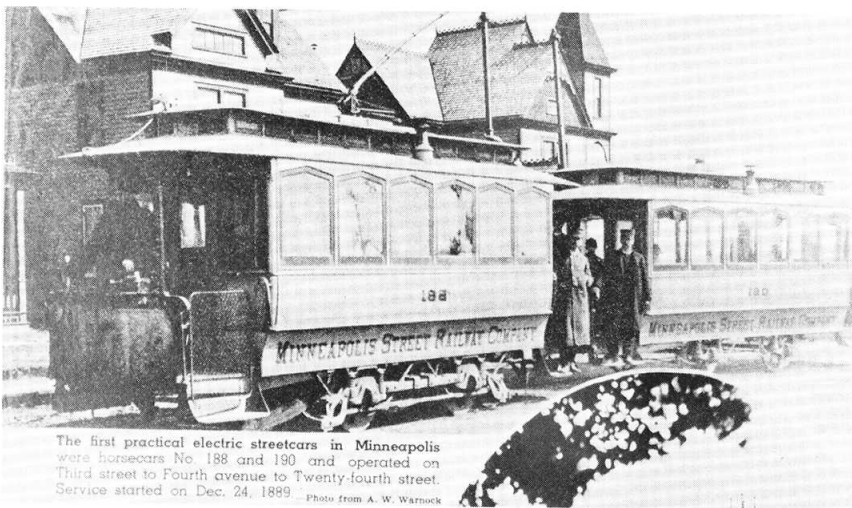
-Jeffrey Braun

For most people, December 24, 1889 was just another Christmas Eve, but for **Thomas Lowry** and the directors of the **Minneapolis Street Railway** it marked a small victory and the beginning of a new era in public transportation for the infant city of Minneapolis. Beginning in 1888, the MSR had been fighting city hall to

replace the expensive horsecars with more economical electric streetcars but they were faced with nothing but bureaucratic red tape. In the 1880's electricity was still a mystical force and a discovery to be regarded with caution. Many people believed that passengers or pedestrians would be electrocuted or that the electricity could seep into the ground and somehow contaminate the ground water. As is often the case, the unknown had created fears both real and imagined.



The crew and passengers pose for their portrait in an obviously summer only horse drawn streetcar. The accommodations for both crew and passengers left a lot to be desired and one can see why people wanted something better. (Bill Olsen Collection)



The first practical electric streetcars in Minneapolis were horsecars No 188 and 190 and operated on Third street to Fourth avenue to Twenty-fourth street. Service started on Dec. 24, 1889. Photo from A. W. Warnock

**Minneapolis enters the Interurban Era! December 24, 1889, MSR No 188 and trailer 190 operate over the first electric streetcar line in Minneapolis.** The first electric streetcars were converted from horse drawn cars. An overwhelming success over the horsecars, the electric streetcar was here to stay. In 1889 no one could have imagined that the tiny MSR would grow to be one of the country's finest rapid transit systems. (Bill Olsen Collection)

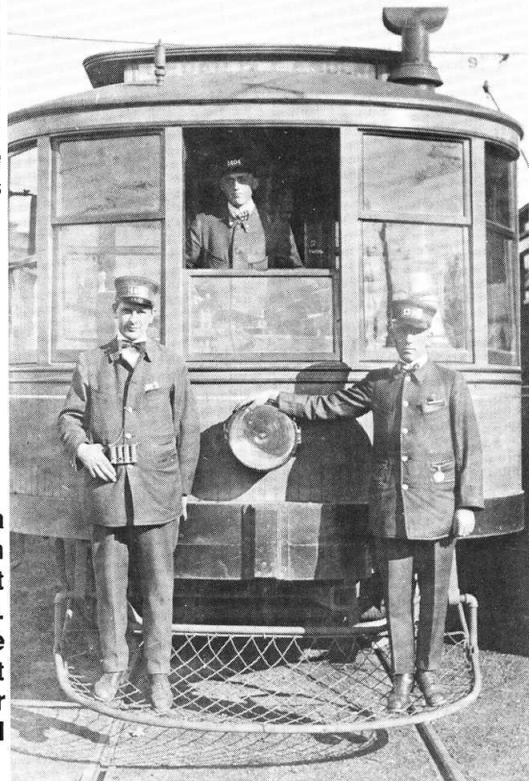
Such was the case when **Tom Lowry** proposed to begin converting his streetcar company from horses to electricity. Acting on these fears, the City Council deferred his request for further study and hinted that they may prefer a cable car system instead. Not one to give up easily, Lowry attempted to secure the funds needed to build a cable car line in Minneapolis while still fighting for his new electric line. Economic depression in the mid 1880's forced the MSR to cut back service in an effort save money and avoid bankruptcy. Regardless of the economic conditions, the MSR was the only convenient way Minneapolis residents had to get around town and passengers began to complain about the slow and inadequate service. Lowry hoped to provide better, cheaper service with new electric cars if the city would let him. In the meantime, a competing firm applied to build a new cable car system adjacent to the MSR's horsecar line. Many people began criticizing Lowry, accusing him of holding a monopoly on the Twin Cities' rapid transit system and supported the men who proposed the new cable system. They felt that competition would prompt the MSR to improve its service or close down. After an ensuing political battle over whether or not Lowry had a monopoly on Minneapolis and St Paul public transport, **Tom Lowry** won out and the upstart cable car company's request was denied. On July 19, 1889, Lowry was given permission to build three new cable car lines.

While the MSR was gathering the funds and supplies to build the new cable system, the City Council, apparently unable to make up their mind as

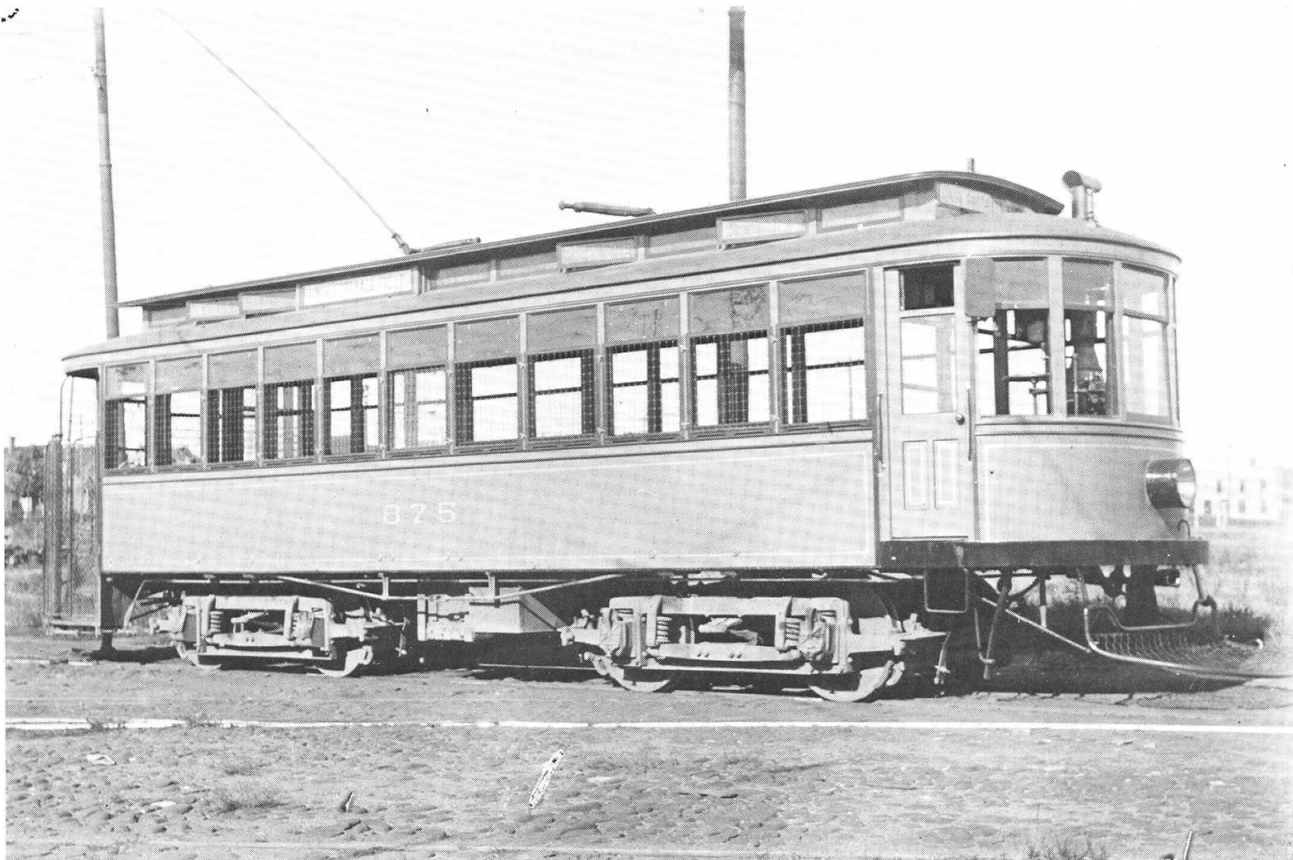
to just what they wanted, on September 14, 1889 authorized an experimental electric streetcar line to be built between First Avenue South and Third Street, and then along Fourth Avenue to Thirty Fourth Street South. Since this is what Lowry had wanted to begin with, they rushed to build the new electric line and within three months had not only replaced the old horsecar narrow gauge (3 feet 6 inches) track on the proposed line with heavier standard gauge (4 feet 8 1/2 inches) track, but they had also rebuilt eight of the newest and largest horsecars into electric cars by giving them new trucks and electric motors, built a generator plant in the old Pray Manufacturing Company building on First Street and Fifth Avenue South, and erected the poles and overhead wire. Christmas Eve at 4:00 pm, December 24, 1889, the first electric streetcar ran in Minneapolis. Minneapolis had entered the "Interurban Era".

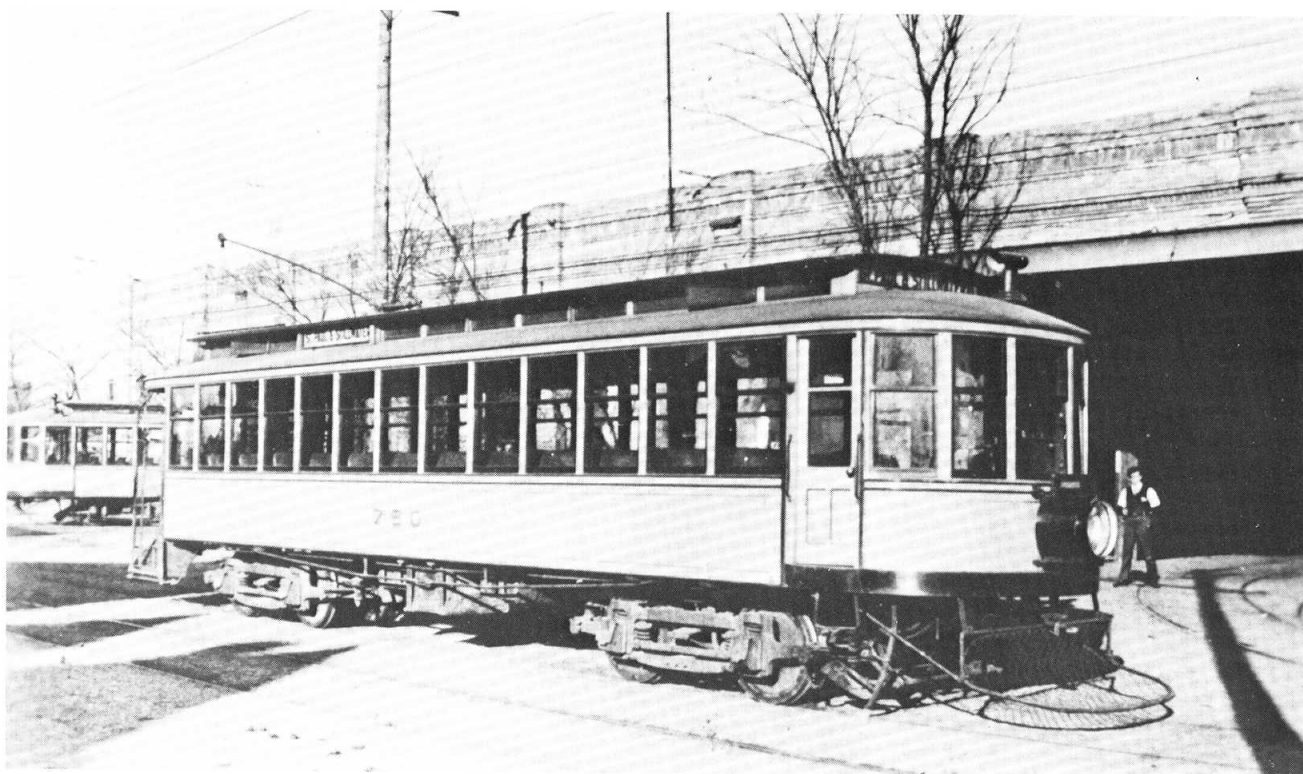
The electric line was so successful that three weeks later on January 17, 1890, the City Council voted to have the company construct additional

**Right: Turn of the century crew poses on the fender of a MSR standard car. MSR built cars had a very distinct style of their own. With pleasing lines and colors, the MSR cars were popular with railfans and passengers alike.**

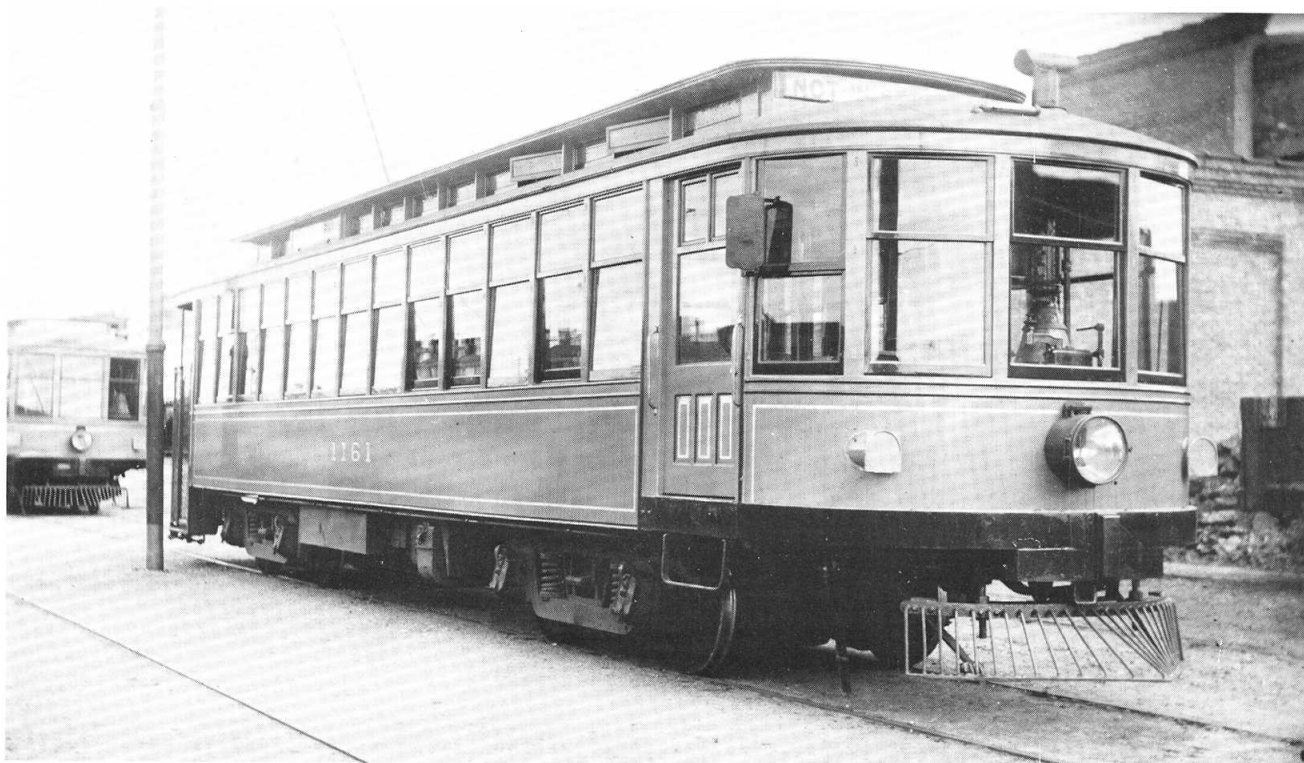


**Below: MSR No 875 is a C-3 class car built in 1901 at the 31st Street shops in Minneapolis. This photo shows the 875 after being rebuilt into a C-5 class car for Stillwater service. (Bill Olsen Collection)**



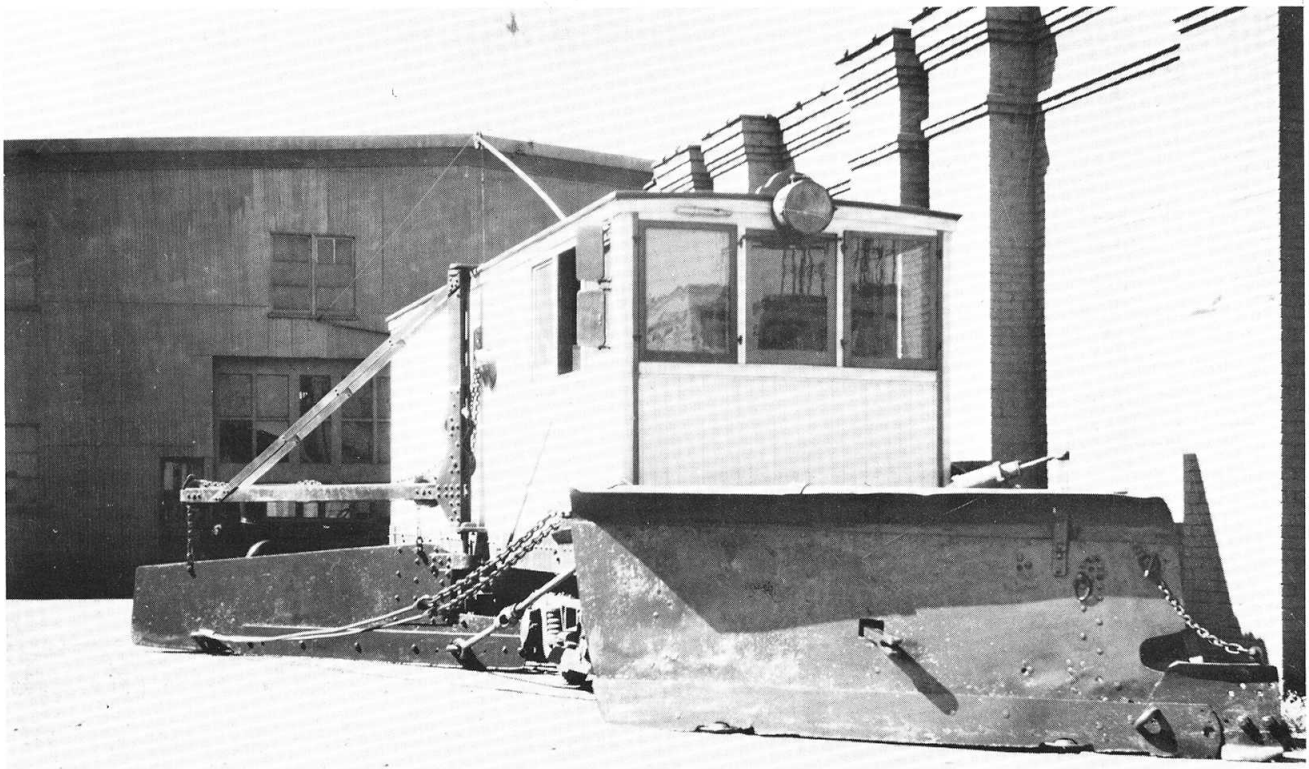


Top: TCRT No 780, a class B-3 car, was built in 1899 at the 31st Street Shops in Minneapolis. This 1904 photo shows No 780 in "St Paul and Stillwater" service outside the 7th Street Station in St Paul complete with its Wagenhal type headlight. Bottom: MSR G-6 class "Minnetonka car" No 1161 at Snelling shops. The G-6 cars were built at the 31st Street shops in 1906 for high speed suburban service to lake Minnetonka and Deephaven. Notice that instead of a fender the Minnetonka high speed cars had a regular locomotive type pilot. (Both Bill Olsen Collection)





Top: MSR 789 was among the cars acquired with the purchase of the St Paul and Suburban Railway in 1899. The cars were originally built in 1892 by the Pullman Palace Car Co with open platforms on both ends. The MSR rebuilt them with enclosed fronts and wire gates around the rear platform. Known as the "North St Paul Pups", No 789 is near the 31st Street Shops on Blaisdell Avenue in 1904. Bottom: Traction lines in Minnesota need to deal with a season known as winter. Here one of the snow plows sits ready to do battle with the snow. (Both Bill Olsen Collection)



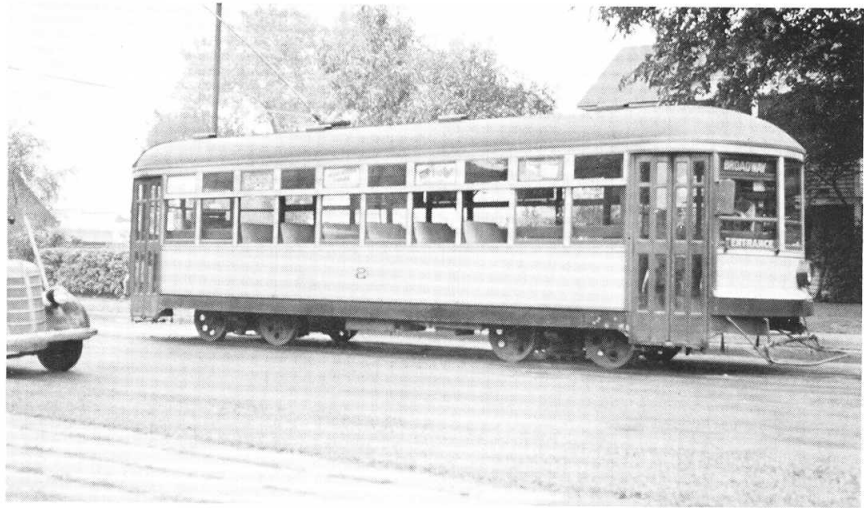
electric lines on the three routes previously designated for cable cars. So the cable system was never built and the brand new parts were sold for scrap. **Tom Lowry** had gotten what he wanted, an electric street railway, but the hard work had just begun. The 1890's were hard times economically and the streetcar line was not spared from financial hardship. Fortunately the new electric lines saved a great deal in expenses over the old horsecar operation and by about 1900 the MSR, now part of the Twin City Rapid Transit Company, was finally turning a profit. By 1950, the MSR had grown from eight electric cars and a single line, to 773 electric cars operating over approximately 440 miles of track in the Twin Cities in addition to having owned two amusement parks, and a number of hotels, taxi and bus companies. TCRT also played a major role in the building of the Twin Cities downtown and suburban areas. Today, 100 years later, only one mile of track, and one electric car of the once mighty empire remain in operation.

It is indeed ironic that 100 years later in 1989 the Minneapolis City Council should again be debating whether or not to build an electric street railway. Unfortunately, this time there doesn't appear to be any **Tom Lowrys** to defend the streetcar leaving their future in Minneapolis as bleak as it was in early 1889. At least in their centennial year, we still have the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line to remind us of **Tom Lowry** and his Big Yellow Cars. 🚲

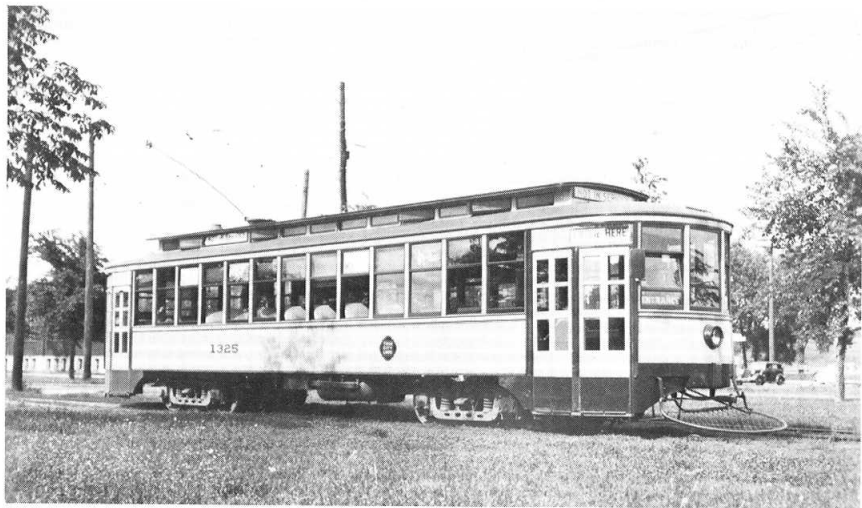
( I want to extend my thanks to **Bill Olsen** for making his TCRT collection available for use in this article.)



**Right: Arrival of brand new PCC cars in 1946 from the St Louis Car Co. Ironically the last and newest streetcars on the system were the first to go before the streetcar line was even shut down in 1954. (Bill Olsen Collection)**



**Class P-10 No 2, is a one man "Stillwater Pup" car built in 1925 at Snelling Shops for Stillwater local service. (Bill Olsen Collection)**



**TCRT No 1325 shows the final configuration of TCRT standard cars before the PCC's arrival. Built in 1908 at Snelling Shops as wooden, class J-2, the car received steel sides sometime during the 1940's. (Bill Olsen Collection)**



## Whistle Stopping in the 80's Minnesota Style

—Jeffrey Braun

From the 1860's till the mid to late 1950's politicians in America often used a unique style of campaigning known as the "Whistle Stop" campaign. During this period of time, a person could go nearly anywhere in the United States by rail, be it a large metropolitan area or a small rural community. Nineteenth Century politicians quickly learned to take advantage of the country's new rail system and the rear platform of the observation became a traveling soapbox. Unfortunately the jet age and television has basically rendered the "Whistle Stop" campaign a nostalgic memory of the past. Regardless, old traditions die hard and while not even close in magnitude to those of the past, one still sees campaign trains today.

The Otter Tail Valley Railroad is a fairly new road in Minnesota that operates over Burlington Northern trackage between St Cloud and Avon, MN and its own trackage between Avon and Fargo—Moorhead on what is the old Great Northern Twin Cities—St Cloud—Fargo—Moorhead mainline through Northwestern Minnesota. Although this seems out of place in an article on the history of whistle stop campaigning, one should learn to refrain from jumping to immediate conclusions.

For most Minnesota residents, October 29, 1988, was a typical Saturday, but for the folks living along the route of the Otter Tail Valley it was going to be a trip back in time. With the November elections just around the corner and the State Senatorial seat held by **Dave Durenberger** being challenged, the Durenberger Volunteer Committee decided to make a final campaign run through Northwestern Minnesota, a whistle stop campaign on none other than the Otter Tail Valley Railroad.

Starting at the Moorhead, MN depot,



Senator Dave Durenberger and Minnesota Transportation Museum member Ray Norton appear to be enjoying the whistle stop tour. (Durenberger Volunteer Committee Photo)



Senator Durenberger and the train crew pose on the back platform of the observation car. Left to right: Senator Durenberger, Art Pew, Ray Norton, Marv Mahre, and Bob McNattin. (Durenberger Volunteer Comm. Photo)

the "Durenberger Express" headed east toward St Cloud. The motive power and varnish were supplied by the Otter Tail Valley Railroad. In addition, The Minnesota Transportation Museum supplied four volunteer members in authentic passenger trainmen's uniform to act as trainmen for the special. Members, **Bob McNattin, Marvin Mahre, Ray Norton, and Art Pew**, donned their uniforms and stepped back into the

1950's as the campaign train rolled through the Northern MN farmland.

Thanks to the Otter Tail Valley Railroad, the Durenberger Volunteer Committee, and these four MTM members, a bit of Minnesota's railroading past was revived and new generations of young Minnesotans were introduced to the art of "Whistle Stopping", Minnesota style.



Above: TCRT No 1300 June 16, 1954 in the final days of TCRT streetcars heading west on Hennepin Avenue at 26th Street. Who would guess on this sunny afternoon in June that ten years later car No 1300 would be the last operable TCRT streetcar and the beginning of a railway museum. (Bill Olsen Photo)

Inside Back Cover: Northern Pacific Class Q-3 Pacific No 2163 sits outside the Mississippi Street Roundhouse in St Paul. Judging by the wood pilot, absence of lighted number boards, and the spoked pilot truck wheels, the photo dates to the 1930's. Apparently 2163 was afflicted with a similar problem as our 2156 due to the outside steam piping. (MTM Collection)

Back Cover: TCRT PCC car No 434 on the Como-Harriet line. The PCC cars followed the TCRT tradition of only the finest equipment. With the first car arriving in 1945, the PCC era was short lived on the TCRT with nearly every car off the roster by 1953. They no doubt would have revitalized the aging TCRT if only the management have given streetcars a chance. (Bill Olsen Collection)



## Minnesota Transportation Museum, Inc. Membership Application

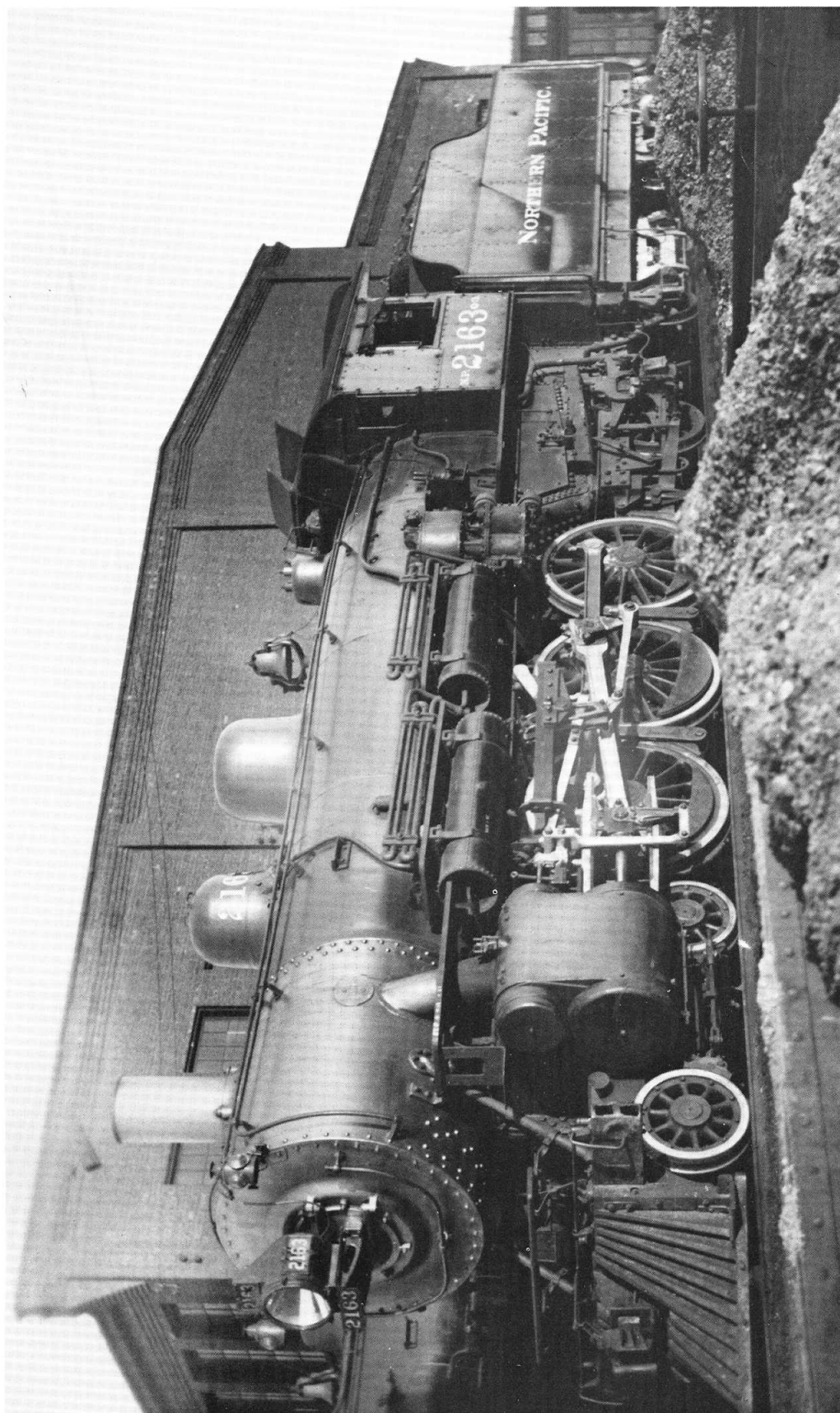
- ☐ FAMILY Membership, \$30 per year. All Members over 18 eligible to operate museum equipment.
- ☐ ACTIVE Membership, \$25 per year. Eligible to operate museum equipment.
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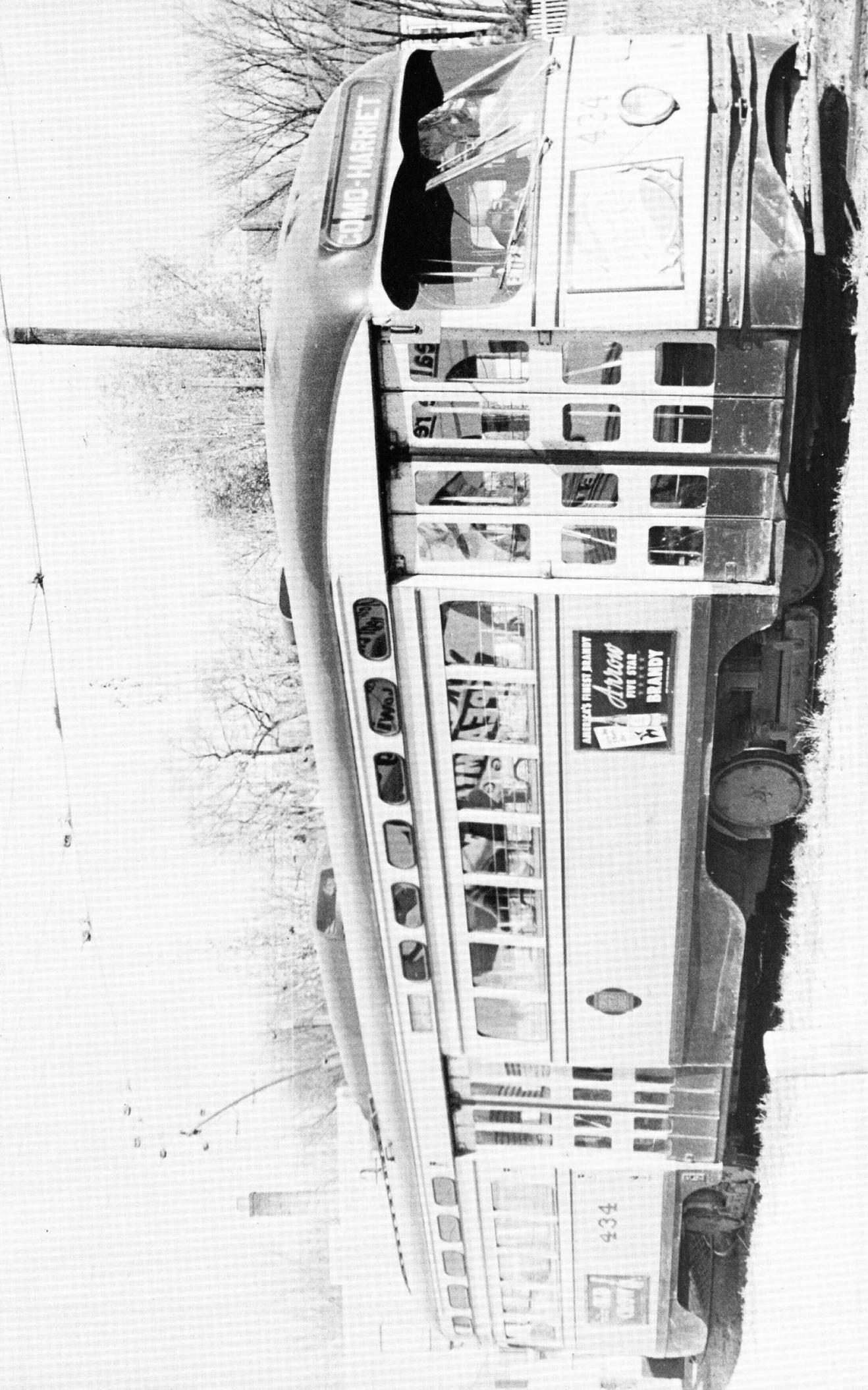
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- ☐ For First Class Delivery, please add \$5 remittance.

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Mail to: Minnesota Transportation Museum, Inc.  
 Box 1796 Pioneer Station  
 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-0796







# MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

PO Box 16509  
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[www.TrolleyRide.org](http://www.TrolleyRide.org)

August 2021

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